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THESIS

HOW TO TRAIN AN ARMY OF INTELLIGENCE ANALYSTS

by

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September 2005

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HOW TO TRAIN AN ARMY OF INTELLIGENCE ANALYSTS

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ABSTRACT

This thesis analyzes facets of US involvement in El Salvador, Colombia, Afghanistan, and Iraq to demonstrate the value of using joint military training between host nation and US military personnel as a vehicle to establish intelligence sharing programs. Military-to-military relations already facilitate the distribution of logistical assistance, the exchange of technical expertise, and the teaching of advanced military capabilities. However, military-to-military relations are more than just a means to provide financial and technological aid. Within this thesis, military relations are presented as a way to develop the trust necessary to operate in areas of current and future US national interest, at a time when increased bilateral cooperation and intelligence sharing between the United States and coalition governments is desperately needed. Guidelines extrapolated from an analysis of political, military, cultural, and intelligence sharing characteristics in each one of these countries are presented to help the US and host nation personnel develop better intelligence capabilities through the training of host nation military forces; in effect, locally train an army of intelligence analysts. Based on current American intelligence shortfalls and elusive transnational enemies, the use of military-to-military relations is proposed as a way to enhance US intelligence capabilities and empower coalition partners against mutual threats.

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

I.	HOW TO TRAIN AN ARMY OF INTELLIGENCE ANALYSTS.....	1
A.	INTRODUCTION.....	1
1.	How a Lack of Training and Intelligence Triumphed in the Spring of 2004.....	1
B.	BACKGROUND	4
C.	THESIS PURPOSE AND SCOPE	7
D.	THESIS METHODOLOGY	10
E.	CHAPTER OUTLINES	11
II.	THE ROLE OF MILITARY-TO-MILITARY RELATIONSHIPS IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF A NEW INTELLIGENCE ARCHITECTURE.....	15
A.	INTRODUCTION.....	15
B.	THE AREAS OF CURRENT AND FUTURE CONFLICT	16
1.	State and Non-State Sponsors of Terrorism.....	17
2.	Home Grown Insurgencies.....	17
3.	Nation Building Abroad	18
4.	The Maritime Threat.....	19
C.	A NEED FOR A NEW INTELLIGENCE ARCHITECTURE	20
D.	HOW TO BUILD A NEW INTELLIGENCE ARCHITECTURE.....	21
E.	ONE SOLUTION: THE USE OF MILITARY-TO-MILITARY RELATIONS IN A NEW INTELLIGENCE ARCHITECTURE.....	24
F.	CONCLUSION	26
III.	EL SALVADOR: A GHOST OF INTELLIGENCE SHARING PAST	29
A.	INTRODUCTION.....	29
B.	US POLICIES IN EL SALVADOR	30
C.	ESAF MILITARY CULTURE AND THE ESTABLISHMENT OF MILITARY-TO-MILITARY RELATIONS.....	33
D.	US ADVISERS IN EL SALVADOR.....	36
E.	US INTELLIGENCE COOPERATION PROGRAMS IN EL SALVADOR	40
F.	CONCLUSION	46
IV.	COLOMBIA: INTELLIGENCE AND INFORMATION SHARING IN THE PRESENT	49
A.	INTRODUCTION.....	49
B.	US POLICIES IN COLOMBIA	50
C.	COLMIL CULTURE AND THE ESTABLISHMENT OF MILITARY-TO-MILITARY RELATIONS.....	54
D.	US TRAINERS IN COLOMBIA.....	56
E.	US INFORMATION SHARING PROGRAMS IN COLOMBIA.....	59
F.	THE REALITIES OF AN ACTIVE INFORMATION AND INTELLIGENCE SHARING PROGRAM.....	63

G.	CONCLUSION	66
V.	AFGHANISTAN: AN INTELLIGENCE SHARING OPPORTUNITY IN PROGRESS	69
A.	INTRODUCTION.....	69
B.	US POLICIES IN AFGHANISTAN	70
C.	MILITARY-TO-MILITARY RELATIONS PRIOR TO THE FALL OF THE TALIBAN REGIME.....	71
D.	MILITARY-TO-MILITARY RELATIONS AFTER THE FALL OF THE TALIBAN REGIME	74
E.	THE INVOLVEMENT US ADVISERS-TRAINERS IN AFGHANISTAN.....	77
F.	US INTELLIGENCE SHARING IN AFGHANISTAN.....	79
G.	OBSTACLES TO STABILITY AND THE SHARING OF INTELLIGENCE IN AFGHANISTAN.....	83
1.	Warlordism.....	84
2.	Drugs	86
3.	The Ongoing Insurgency	88
4.	Fragmented Training.....	89
H.	CONCLUSION	91
VI.	ARGUMENTS, COUNTERARGUMENTS, AND IRAQ	93
A.	INTRODUCTION.....	93
B.	THESIS PURPOSE AND SCOPE	94
C.	THESIS METHODOLOGY	95
D.	THE ARGUMENTS	96
E.	THE COUNTERARGUMENTS	102
F.	IRAQ	107
1.	Intelligence Sharing in Iraq	109
2.	Obstacles Towards the Application of Provided Guidelines	111
G.	CONCLUSION	114
VII.	GUIDELINES: HOW TO TRAIN AN ARMY OF INTELLIGENCE ANALYSTS	119
A.	INTRODUCTION.....	119
	LIST OF REFERENCES	127
	INITIAL DISTRIBUTION LIST	135

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I. HOW TO TRAIN AN ARMY OF INTELLIGENCE ANALYSTS

A. INTRODUCTION

1. How a Lack of Training and Intelligence Triumphed in the Spring of 2004

In the aftermath of both the fall of the Taliban government and the regime of Saddam Hussein, the delay in training capable, indigenous security forces and developing an effective intelligence architecture hampered US operations in both Afghanistan and Iraq.¹ During the spring of 2004, the coalition's inability to establish a professional relationship between US and Iraqi military personnel, the absence of a comprehensive intelligence architecture on the ground, and American failures to properly train a capable indigenous security element, converged with dire consequences in the town of Falluja, Iraq. Located approximately 35 miles west of Baghdad in an area commonly referred to as the Sunni Triangle, Falluja had long been known as the headquarters of anti-occupation rebels and religious fundamentalists. Personnel familiar with the US military's initial attempt to enter Falluja in early April have corroborated statements made by the Commander of the 1st Armored Division, Major General Martin Dempsey, concerning the refusal by members of a newly formed Iraqi battalion to participate in offensive operations.² "About 50 percent of the security forces that we've built over the past year stood tall and firm," Major General Dempsey remarked, "about 40 percent walked off the job because they were intimidated. And about 10 percent actually worked against us."³ Among the reasons given by US officials for the military debacle in Falluja were the hasty integration of Iraqi forces to US battle plans, the lack of training and

¹ For purposes of this thesis, the term "indigenous" is not only used to refer to officially sanctioned military forces within a host nation, but to also refer to any organized group, regardless of sophistication, which can be rallied to support US and coalition objectives. An intelligence architecture is defined as an organized intelligence apparatus, a structured environment in which intelligence disciplines, capabilities, and procedures are deployed in support of selected civilian and/or military requirements.

² Jim Michaels *USA Today* (22 April 2004), Bay Fang *U.S. News & World Report* (17 May 2004), Rod Norland *Newsweek* (5 July 2004 issue), Steven R. Weisman *New York Times* (20 May 2004), Eric Schmitt *New York Times* (24 May 2004), Daniel Williams *Washington Post Foreign Service* (7 June 2004).

³ Michaels, J. (2004, April 22). U.S. plans elite force for security. *USA Today*. Retrieved June 10, 2004, from <http://printthis.clickability.com>

proper equipping of Iraqi recruits, a dangerous security situation within the area of operations, insurgent intimidation of Iraqi soldiers, and the new battalion's lack of combat experience.

In addition to instances in which US military personnel were tasked with training Iraqi recruits just hours before the start of offensive operations, American officials ran into difficulties trying to identify, assess, and convince previously dismissed Iraqi generals to lead newly "trained" Iraqi Civil Defense Corps (ICDC) troops.⁴ Officials such as Dan Senor, then the chief US civilian spokesman in Iraq, acknowledged the painful reality that without US knowledge of Iraqi politics or background on Iraqi military personnel, "you cannot pull generals out of thin air."⁵ The public relations impact that followed the search by US officials for suitable Iraqi senior officers was severe. By the first week of May, amidst confusion by both Iraqi and American officials, US military commanders found themselves firing one Iraqi general, appointing another, and inviting Iraqi majors, colonels, and generals to apply for their old jobs, all within the span of a week. Prior to his departure from Iraq after spending a year in charge of the assembling and training of Iraqi army, police, and civil defense troops, US Army Major General Paul Eaton admitted that the US Army "had the wrong training focus-on individual cops rather than leaders."⁶ More importantly, US Marine officers outside Falluja were going on record stating that they felt "a sense of grim foreboding about the prospect of joint patrols with Iraqis in the city."⁷ According to the US Marines, beyond the limitations of the hastily trained Iraqi Civil Defense Corps, the loyalty of Iraqi troops was seriously in doubt. With mounting pressure by US officials to enter Falluja, Iraqi combat skills and allegiances had not been fully examined. American strategic desires to turn over security responsibilities to Iraqi troops sooner rather than later were quickly evaporating.

⁴ Chandrasekaran, R. (2004, April 27) Iraqi forces get crash course for patrols in Falluja. *The Washington Post*. Retrieved April 29, 2004, from <http://washingtonpost.com/ac2/wp-dyn?admin/contentID=A47652-2004Apr27>

⁵ Fleishman, J. (2004, April 27) Ex Baathists offer US advice, await call to arms. *Los Angeles Times*. Retrieved June 10, 2004, from <http://ebird.afis.osd.mil/e20040427279605>

⁶ Krane, J. (2004, June 10) Iraq's Security Forces not Ready. *Denver Post*. Retrieved July 29, 2004, from <http://ebird.afis.osd.mil/e20040610294251>

⁷ Kifner, J. (2004, April 27) In the Besieged City, The Marines Look Ahead Uneasily to Joint Patrols with Iraqis. *New York Times*. Retrieved June 10, 2004, from <http://ebird.afis.osd.mil/e20040427279538>

In addition to the US intelligence community's difficulty in assisting military officials with the vetting of potential leaders of the Falluja Brigade due to a lack of ground-level information and background on the Iraqi military, analysts were unable to find anyone that could reliably inform them on activities within Falluja. The possibility of using the newly formed Falluja Brigade as a US-trained army of human intelligence sensors stalled in the outskirts of Falluja with hundreds of Iraqi soldiers refusing to fight. Unable to coordinate with indigenous assets inside or outside the city, analysts were left with intelligence gaps regarding the enemy's current and future intent. In the absence of Iraqi military or civilian reference points, the US ability to glean intelligence concerning the origins and motivation of the insurgency within Falluja was reduced. Without reliable information, intelligence was also limited regarding the insurgents' location, identity, and the cultural dynamics developing within a city widely known for its religious piety. Based on a failure to establish capable and trustworthy indigenous battalions and effectively train Iraqi recruits to conduct joint security patrols with US Marines, the benefits of establishing human intelligence networks with experienced, Iraqi military counterparts never materialized.

While coalition forces outside the city battled the confusion and uncertainties related to the establishment of the Falluja Brigade, insurgents within the city regrouped and cloaked themselves with the civilian population. By the time US officials in Baghdad had transferred sovereignty to the new interim Iraqi government in June, an initial desire to work through Iraqi military and civilian personnel in Falluja had been replaced by short-term goals to place an Iraqi face on the forces tasked to help avenge the death of American contractors.⁸ Approximately three months after the collapse of the US trained Falluja Brigade and the US Marines' entry and exit from Falluja, the city was completely under the control of insurgent forces. The American attempt to stand up a competent Iraqi defense force in Falluja during combat operations in spring 2004 was gradually labeled a failure.⁹

⁸ Rubin, A., McManus, D. (2004, October 24) Why America Has Waged a Loosing Battle on Fallouja. *Los Angeles Times*.

⁹ Zoroya, G. (2004, June 14) Fallujah Brigade Tries US Patience. *USA Today*. Retrieved July 29, 2004, from <http://printhis.clickability.com>

Even after the final full-blown American assault on Falluja eight months later, the city remained a glaring reminder of the consequences related to the absence of properly trained Iraqi forces, the realization of unnecessary training failures, and recurring intelligence shortfalls. During an interview in the weeks following the April debacle in Falluja, the senior US military officer in charge of arming and training Iraqi national forces, Lieutenant General David Petraeus, categorized efforts to train foreign troops on a reduced timeline as “building an airplane in flight.”¹⁰ Could the cautious development of military-to-military relationships between US forces and erroneously dismissed Iraqi military elements immediately after the fall of Baghdad have helped prevent the Falluja debacle? Could military ties between US units and Iraqi indigenous forces have been helpful in the establishment of a much-needed intelligence architecture? No one will ever know for certain. However, military and political setbacks like the one seen in Falluja demonstrate that a decreased American military presence and the conception of a democracy-based government in places like Iraq can be further insured through the security provided by a capable indigenous defense force and an effective intelligence architecture. Nonetheless, coalition forces involved in the training of Iraqis and Afghanis continue to “build an airplane in flight” amidst a dynamic security situation. Despite years of US military presence in Iraq, Afghanistan, the Balkans, and Latin America, elements of the US military continue to have difficulties understanding the human terrain, relationships with local military members and the civilian population are tenuous at best, and essential elements of intelligence information continue to go unanswered. In the future, can training and intelligence shortfalls like those experienced in Falluja be avoided?

B. BACKGROUND

Issues such as those previously discussed concerning US operations in Falluja reflect many of the different factors involved in conducting combat operations on foreign soil. However, this thesis asserts that the issues also reflect the importance of proactively

¹⁰ Norland, R. (2004, July 5) Iraq's Repairman. *Newsweek*. Retrieved June 28, 2004, from <http://www.msnbc.msn.com/id/5305713/site/newsweek/>

teaching internal defense skills to current and future allies whenever possible, while emphasizing the value of the military relationship to foster a long-term intelligence effort. The techniques and procedures developed and used by the United States to conduct intelligence collection and train foreign militaries have been generally documented over the years in publications, manuals, journals, and articles of varying academic caliber and security classification. Nonetheless, research of operations in Iraq and Afghanistan demonstrates that although US training of indigenous forces has been going on for several years, the process to improve US intelligence in the same places has been marginalized due to a lack of human intelligence. Moreover, a high threat environment, intelligence gaps, equipment and leadership shortfalls, local intimidation, cultural differences, and a lack of battlefield awareness are hampering the attainment of US strategic goals.

This thesis will put forward facets of the US involvement in El Salvador and the ongoing conflict in Colombia as examples of the implementation of intelligence sharing programs by way of established joint military training. Both the Civil War in El Salvador (1979-1992) and the current civil war in Colombia (1964-Present) have presented foreign policy concerns for the United States and resulted in significant involvement of US military personnel in an advisory and training capacity.¹¹ US strategy in these two countries made the establishment of an intelligence architecture, in the shape of regional and joint intelligence centers, a necessity. Preliminary research of these two conflicts has revealed that both the situation on the ground and the US desire to maintain hemispheric stability shaped US intelligence sharing policies and impacted the tactical and strategic interests of the countries involved. In Iraq and Afghanistan, reports continue to describe the difficulties encountered by US personnel in the areas of military training and intelligence collection. Recent failures by Iraqi and Afghani troops to engage insurgents in combat are summarized by many frustrated US service members who exclaim that

¹¹ For purposes of this thesis, the military coup conducted by Salvadoran officers in October of 1979 and the signing of the UN sponsored peace accords in 1992 are considered to be the beginning and end of the Salvadoran civil war respectively. The founding of the Marxist insurgency group FARC (Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias de Colombia) in 1964 has been designated by the author as the start of the civil war in Colombia.

there is no blueprint for the training of new forces, much less the establishment of an indigenous intelligence architecture.¹²

This thesis demonstrates the value of establishing future intelligence architectures by way of the ongoing training of military forces and the intangibles of a military-to-military exchange. At the conclusion of this project, guidelines on how to use joint military training as a vehicle to build an intelligence architecture will be presented, based on a review of training and intelligence sharing policies. These guidelines have been extrapolated from an analysis of political, military, cultural, and intelligence sharing characteristics in El Salvador, Colombia, Afghanistan, and Iraq and are presented to help the US and host nation personnel develop better intelligence capabilities through the training of host nation military forces; in effect, locally train an army of intelligence analysts.

The current situation faced by the United States in Iraq and Afghanistan differs in many obvious ways from the situation faced by the United States in El Salvador and Colombia. Nonetheless, the author of this thesis maintains that all of these countries have been united during one moment in time by: the mutual need to empower indigenous security forces amidst crisis, the need to establish or improve a bilateral intelligence relationship, and secure shared strategic interests. In addition, it is proposed that the training and intelligence shortfalls previously documented by US officials during the civil war in El Salvador and Colombia are comparable to those currently experienced by American forces in Afghanistan and Iraq since the fall of the Taliban government and the Saddam Hussein regime. Therefore, it is hypothesized that the United States military can avoid intelligence shortfalls in future conflicts by training foreign armies using aspects of the Salvadoran, Colombian, and Afghan military-to-military relationship. In addition to a review of ongoing events in the Middle East, a search for a model or guide within the case studies of El Salvador and Colombia has been conducted with an eye towards the future. By developing military-to-military exchanges in current and future potential areas of conflict, the United States can implement long-term security commitments through

¹² Kifner, J. (2004, May 3) On or Off? Odd U.S. Alliance With an Ex-Hussein General. *New York Times*. Retrieved June 10, 2004, from <http://ebird.afis.osd.mil/e20040503281524>

indigenous relationships that will facilitate the establishment of an intelligence architecture at the grassroots level, support US national objectives, and avoid reactive nation-building efforts.

C. THESIS PURPOSE AND SCOPE

Military relations can be fertile ground for the establishment of an intelligence architecture in areas where the United States is already providing or will provide the support necessary to ensure stability, train foreign military personnel, and/or provide humanitarian aid. Within the Global War on Terrorism, the proactive engagement of US forces with foreign militaries on their own soil can be useful in countering the spread or even the inception of insurgencies and terrorism in areas of potential future conflict. According to John Parachini, author of the article *Putting WMD (Weapons of Mass Destruction) Terrorism into Perspective*, sponsor states “not only enable terrorist groups to thrive but also enable their ability to acquire unconventional capabilities with sufficient scale for truly catastrophic attacks.”¹³ Recent hostilities in the Middle East have also clearly revealed the importance of securing and understanding a state or nation's internal security infrastructure prior to engaging in any significant combat and/or nation-building efforts.

This project will demonstrate the difference between the execution of a short-term, short-sighted commitment in a country engulfed in crisis and the use of bilateral military exchanges to develop a proactive long-term relationship in weak or failing states to secure mutual strategic, operational, and tactical gains. During an annual symposium, Joint Staff Director of Operations Lieutenant General Norton A. Schwartz asked his audience to “imagine the impact of an entire cadre of people with the specific ethnic connections, language and communication skills we [the United States] need -- targeted to key regions for the war on terrorism. Such a group of people, with unique ‘non-commando’ capabilities and characteristics, might constitute a new and unusually diverse

¹³ Parachini, John. (2003) *Putting WMD (Weapons of Mass Destruction) Terrorism into Perspective*. The Washington Quarterly. 26:44 pp. 47. The Center for Strategic and International Studies and the Massachusetts Institute of Technology.

pillar of the special operations community-able to work in close concert with direct action, mobility, civil affairs and other forces to help prepare the battlespace to find and fix the enemy.”¹⁴

Research reviewed for this project demonstrates that the well-established multinational relationships present in countries like El Salvador and Colombia have resulted in long-term security benefits for the United States. Therefore, an attempt will be made by the author to demonstrate that security agreements such as intelligence-sharing programs, when developed in conjunction with a military training relationship vice independent of such training, can improve future US national security in ways that go beyond the nation-building efforts currently underway overseas. The goal of this thesis is to further US security and national interests abroad, and improve US training of foreign militaries for current and future conflicts. The research in support of this project consists of an in-depth analysis of past and present training and intelligence-sharing models from El Salvador, Colombia and Afghanistan. In producing a thesis that is contemporary and yields applicable results, recent and ongoing US military training in Iraq will be studied. Based on available information, a modern application of the proposed relationship between military relations and intelligence agreements to current and future events has not been formally researched or documented. Finally, at the conclusion of this project, comprehensive recommendations on how to use strong military-to-military ties developed by joint training to build a mutually beneficial intelligence architecture will be offered.

This research project is driven by the hypothesis that the US military can mitigate intelligence shortfalls in certain types of conflict by training foreign armies using lessons learned during the military training of indigenous forces in El Salvador, Colombia, Afghanistan, and Iraq. In addition, it is proposed that the US military can leverage the contributions of multinational partners through a military-to-military relationship to establish an intelligence architecture capable of providing battlespace awareness and

¹⁴ Prepared remarks of the Joint Staff Director of Operations, Lieutenant General Norton A. Schwartz, for the 15th Annual National Defense Industrial Association Special Operations and Low Intensity Conflict (SO/LIC) Symposium, Washington, D.C., 6 FEB 2004.

delivering fused and accurate intelligence to combatant units. A properly established intelligence architecture can enable future success in unilateral and coalition operations. Moreover, this architecture can provide policy makers with continuous, regional indications and warnings, and provide operators with the proactive intelligence support needed to plan and execute appropriate military options.

There are many techniques and approaches used to train an army. The US military uses training vehicles such as Foreign Internal Defense (FID) military advisor programs, officer exchange programs and US embassy protocols in an effort to establish multinational military cooperation. The effectiveness, advantages, or disadvantages of these programs will not be addressed within this thesis. Rather than discussing the *effectiveness* of multinational training, efforts will be made to discuss the *value* of military-to-military exchanges, tailored intelligence networks, and the benefits of applying specific lessons learned to future American areas of interest. For decades, the United States has offered countries in the US Southern Command (USSOUTHCOM) area of operations effective training, discipline, and professionalism.¹⁵ US Southern Command and US Central Command policies at an unclassified level will be used to define the environment and boundaries in which military-to-military ties developed by joint training can facilitate the creation of a mutually beneficial intelligence architecture. This thesis does not focus on the effectiveness of counterdrug efforts in Colombia, but instead focuses on the origins, training practices, and results produced by US trained elements of the Colombian military. The past and current intelligence sharing practices between El Salvador, Colombia, Afghanistan, Iraq and the United States will be qualified or evaluated at an unclassified level only to illustrate how the existence of joint training arrangements has facilitated or impaired intelligence sharing agreements.

¹⁵ The United States Southern Command area of operations includes the land mass of Latin America south of Mexico, the adjacent waters of Central America, South America, and Mexico, portions of the Atlantic Sea, The Caribbean Sea, and numerous island nations and European territories.

D. THESIS METHODOLOGY

In order to determine if the US military can mitigate intelligence shortfalls in certain types of conflict by using previous training and intelligence sharing models, a case study of the training and intelligence relationship between the United States, El Salvador, Colombia, Afghanistan and Iraq has been conducted. The following aspects pertaining to the interaction of US personnel with counterparts in the above mentioned countries are discussed: the history and development of American and host country policies, the organizational structure and culture of the military and intelligence entities involved, the degree and type of US involvement, and when possible, information or intelligence sharing agreements. Both the boundaries in which military-to-military ties can be developed to achieve mutual intelligence goals and the circumstances in which a case study can be applied to current and future situations will be detailed. Any unique, positive, or negative warfare and conflict characteristics within the case studies will be identified in an effort to demonstrate how the establishment of an intelligence architecture based on military-to-military exchange is an approach from which present and future allies can benefit. The external validity of supporting material will be demonstrated through a review of available organizational documents and with the help of subject matter experts.

Conclusions will be drawn after comparing the methods, information/intelligence sharing arrangements, and training programs used in El Salvador, Colombia, Afghanistan and Iraq. As a result of this research, and at the conclusion of this project, applicable recommendations will be presented in an effort to support US military involvement in future areas of conflict. More importantly, it is hoped that this product will be used as a concept of operations in “the next country,” in order to establish a successful and appropriate intelligence architecture model that is based on a military-to-military relationship that has been nurtured over time, and can support operations at the tactical, operational, and strategic level.

Why should the US military get involved in “the next country” right now? According once again to Lieutenant General Norton A. Schwartz, “Beyond [US] information needs, the quality and nature of our relationships will strongly influence our

ability to access the battlespace. We need better focus on building, maintaining and leveraging relationships with the security forces of our partner nations.”¹⁶ This research project is an effort to identify the elements within a sample of conflicts in order to help the US military establish an intelligence architecture in future weak and failing states using the proactive military-to-military relations. Any program that can help the United States and its allies moderate or prevent the inception of hostilities such as those seen in places like Iraq and Afghanistan must be examined. These recent conflicts have demonstrated how reactive diplomatic and US military policies can place American lives in danger and project strategic goals in an unfavorable and unpopular international light. However, deliberate, proactive, military-to-military exchanges can provide an insight into doctrinal development process in potential areas of future involvement. More importantly, it is hoped that an innovative approach that uses the training of military forces in potential areas of future conflict to protect vital strategic interests will also, by way of the same training, establish the foundation for an intelligence collection network where previously one was inadequate or did not exist.

E. CHAPTER OUTLINES

Chapter II: The Role of Military-to-Military Relationships in the Development of a New Intelligence Architecture

The need for a new intelligence architecture is defined and put forth based on the emergence of enemies that are proficient in unconventional tactics and operate in unfamiliar battlespaces. In addition, the value of establishing new intelligence architectures by way of military-to-military relations is presented as one way to improve current and future intelligence efforts, support military operations, and further American foreign policy.

Chapter III: El Salvador: A Ghost of Intelligence Sharing Past

In order to determine whether an emphasis on military-to-military relationships can advance future intelligence efforts, the involvement of the United States military in

¹⁶ Prepared remarks during the 15th Annual National Defense Industrial Association Special Operations and Low Intensity Conflict (SO/LIC) Symposium, Washington, D.C., 6 FEB 2004

El Salvador has been examined using a discerning eye. This chapter presents several of the procedures and challenges encountered by US forces in El Salvador in an effort to provide guidelines for proactive, operational engagement of current and future military allies. The importance of defining the intelligence needs of the host nation, the value of proactively identifying a counterpart's intelligence capabilities, and the benefits of a decent and open military-to-military relationship are lessons that survived this civil war, and in the future, can help secure a path to victory.¹⁷

Chapter IV: Colombia: Intelligence and Information Sharing in the Present

American foreign policy, the quality of a host nation's military force, and operational security are several key issues that must be considered, often concurrently, when evaluating any military-to-military relationship and/or information sharing program. This case study analyzes the role of military-to-military relations between American and Colombian personnel as a vehicle for information sharing, in the context of Colombia's battle against insurgent forces.

Chapter V: Afghanistan: An Intelligence Sharing Opportunity in Progress

In this chapter, the benefits associated with sharing information and intelligence are explored in the context of the military, logistical, and training challenges encountered by US forces in Afghanistan, both before and after the fall of the Taliban. Examples of US and Afghan intelligence efforts are discussed to identify how to improve current and future intelligence sharing relationships. This case study reveals that a failure to maintain military-to-military relations throughout a conflict and an inability to recognize that changes in strategy require changes in intelligence relations, can deprive US and host nation personnel of the stability and continuity needed to achieve military goals.

¹⁷ The term "host nation" is used throughout this text to generically describe the origins of foreign military and intelligence personnel. The use of this term does not imply that the United States should only engage in intelligence sharing relationships with officially recognized nations. Governing and opposition groups within organizations, states, non-states, and even failing states must be considered as potential allies in current and future conflicts and when necessary, actively sought as partners in intelligence sharing agreements.

Conversely, the establishment of committed and long-term military-to-military relations can be instrumental in building the confidence and infrastructure necessary to foster the successful sharing of intelligence.

Chapter VI: Arguments, Counterarguments, and Iraq

The purpose, scope, and methodology of this thesis are reviewed as a preamble to a final analysis of the hypothesis and research questions originally presented in the introductory chapter. Thesis arguments are also detailed as part of a discussion of the reasons in favor and against the use of military-to-military relations to improve intelligence capabilities. Both this chapter and thesis conclude with a re-assessment of US involvement in Iraq prior to the introduction of a set of guidelines that when applied, can improve American intelligence sharing capabilities by way of international military-to-military relations.

Guidelines: How to Train an Army of Intelligence Analysts

This chapter provides a set of guidelines that, based on specific case studies, can establish or improve American intelligence sharing capabilities by way of international military-to-military relations, in effect, help the United States and host nations successfully and locally train an army of intelligence analysts.

Throughout this thesis, it is asserted that military-to-military relations are more than just a means to exchange information. Military-to-military relations are presented as a way to develop the trust necessary to conduct coalition operations in areas of current and future US national interest, at a time when increased bilateral cooperation and intelligence sharing between the United States and emerging governments are desperately needed.

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II. THE ROLE OF MILITARY-TO-MILITARY RELATIONSHIPS IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF A NEW INTELLIGENCE ARCHITECTURE

A. INTRODUCTION

In October 1994, the signing and distribution of an official memorandum prepared for the newly appointed Director of Naval Intelligence (DNI), marked the introduction of a new vision to the US naval intelligence community.¹⁸ Although the signing and dissemination of new objectives and guidance is expected by naval professionals following a change in leadership, this memorandum's re-organizational foresight went largely unnoticed. Along with community-specific intelligence issues and goals, the prospective DNI declared a need "to redevelop the naval intelligence focus / 'culture' once applied against the Soviet navy problem." Of note, this requirement was made by the eventual DNI approximately three years after the conclusion of Operations Desert Storm and Desert Shield in 1991, and preceded the beginning Operation Iraqi Freedom in March of 2003 by almost ten years.

In retrospect, the naval intelligence community did not adequately heed the call in 1994 to discard the Cold War mentality. Along with thousands of analysts from the US intelligence community at large, most military intelligence professionals did not properly recognize the eviction of the Iraqi army from Kuwait as the engagement of an enemy in a new and adverse area of operations. US intelligence professionals repeatedly missed opportunities to redevelop their focus, redefine their culture, and reorganize the intelligence community in preparation for new and unconventional threats. Ten years later, the intelligence community was caught unprepared, like the majority of American military leadership, and forced to reap the consequences of operating in a conventional warfare paradigm.

For purposes of this report, an intelligence architecture is defined as an organized intelligence apparatus, a structured environment in which intelligence disciplines,

¹⁸ Memorandum for the record, by Captain R.B. Porterfield, US Navy, prospective Director of Naval Intelligence, 12 October 1994

capabilities, and procedures are deployed in support of selected civilian and/or military requirements. The decision to anchor US intelligence architectures to technological means following the collapse of the Soviet Union stifled the expansion of the indigenous, tactical level intelligence capability that is needed today. According to Lieutenant Colonel Lester W. Grau, “the military intelligence effort devoted to combating [Iraqi insurgency movements] has little in common with conventional intelligence operations in support of conventional maneuver war.”¹⁹ Previously reviewed case studies of the civil war in El Salvador, the battle against insurgent forces in Colombia, the war in Iraq, and US combat operations in Afghanistan make it evident that conventional, top-down intelligence architectures, although capable of supporting the conventional fight, have fallen short against asymmetric threats.²⁰ In the following paragraphs, the need for a new intelligence architecture is defined and put forth based on the emergence of enemies that are proficient in unconventional tactics and operate in previously unknown battlespaces. In addition, the value of establishing new intelligence architectures by way of military-to-military relations is presented as one way to improve current and future intelligence efforts, support military operations, and further American foreign policy.

B. THE AREAS OF CURRENT AND FUTURE CONFLICT

It is very difficult, and some analysts say even impossible, to identify with certainty the type and variety of threats that will challenge the United States in the future.²¹ However, it is certain that the manner in which US military and intelligence entities organize and plan for the challenges of the future will fail if decision makers prepare by reconstituting previous conventional battles. Areas of current and future conflict as they are described below, are meant only to provide a sample of the numerous

¹⁹ Grau, L.W. (2004 July-August). Something Old, Something New: Guerrillas, Terrorists, and Intelligence Analysis. *Military Review*, 43.

²⁰ Asymmetric is defined by John T. Chenery, author of “Transnational Threats 101: Today’s Asymmetric Battlefield,” *Military Intelligence Professional Bulletin*, (Jul-Sep 1999):2, as “any unconventional or inexpensive method or means used to avoid [US] our strengths, and exploit our vulnerabilities.”

²¹ This statement is based on the author’s professional experiences during seven years of work in multiple strategic, operational, and tactical intelligence assignments.

environments and challenges that the US intelligence community is facing and will continue to face in the future. It is proposed that a general portrayal of current and future battlespaces and a subsequent discussion of how to build a new intelligence architecture is necessary to identify the procedures and protagonists needed to optimize US intelligence support in the future.

1. State and Non-State Sponsors of Terrorism

In the weeks following the September 11, 2001 terrorist attack on the United States, the administration of President George W. Bush made it clear that in the Global War on Terrorism (GWOT), the existence of terrorist organizations was facilitated by the logistical, ideological, and financial support provided by willing state sponsors and allowed by countries incapable of eradicating terrorism within their borders. The US National Strategy for Combating Terrorism directly correlates the reduction of terrorist scope and capabilities to the need to locate and destroy foreign sanctuaries.²² Therefore, within American policy efforts to “deny, defeat, diminish, and defend” against terrorism, the verb deny refers to US efforts to stop state sponsorship and terrorist sanctuaries on a global scale. However, US measures to halt state sponsorship currently revolve around largely military, financial, and political alliances with affected countries. Current American policies against state sponsorship are vulnerable because they do not engage citizens living among terrorist elements in sanctuary countries. The United States must go beyond an impersonal policy of financial payments and diplomatic rhetoric and focus on ways to empower the inhabitants of state sponsor territories to voluntarily reject their state’s sponsorship of terror.

2. Home Grown Insurgencies

In the words of RAND analyst Bruce Hoffman, the inability of US political and military planners to prepare for operations following the fall of Baghdad reflected “the [US] failure not only to recognize the incipient conditions for insurgencies, but also ignore its nascent manifestations and arrest its growth before it is able to gain initial

²² National Strategy for Combating Terrorism, February 2003, 11.

traction and in turn momentum.”²³ In addition to the demonstrated complexity and multi-dimensional aspects of an insurgency movement, the intelligence required to prepare for counterinsurgency situations must be collected using comprehensive intelligence architectures. According to General Rene Emilio Ponce, the defense minister at the height of the civil war in El Salvador (1979-1992), “90 percent of counterinsurgency is political, social, economic and ideological and only 10 percent military.”²⁴ To date, combat operations in Iraq and Afghanistan have revealed the US military’s limited cultural awareness and its difficulty in containing a decentralized insurgent movement; facts that will undoubtedly encourage many US adversaries to develop or improve similar asymmetric capabilities. In order to defeat insurgencies in areas of future conflict, military intelligence assets must be operating *on the ground* long before the commencement of hostilities. The proactive development by intelligence professionals of the cultural, social, political, and military baselines determined critical in El Salvador but ignored in Iraq can not only identify the precursors of an insurgency, but also assist in the development of appropriate courses of action from the tactical to the strategic level.

3. Nation Building Abroad

A review of the missions conducted by US forces in Haiti, Somalia, Afghanistan and Iraq can quickly illustrate the wide breadth of intelligence expertise and assistance necessary in any nation building effort. Since the fall of the Taliban regime, US forces and their respective intelligence units have been involved in missions to support humanitarian relief, assist in provincial reconstruction, establish civil affair programs and apprehend High Value Targets (HVTs). In an effort to receive and act on intelligence within hours of its collection, US forces have been stationed in Afghan villages for extended periods of time, thereby “becoming a more permanent, familiar presence.”²⁵ Although efforts to establish a positive relationship with a native population take time and may not be completely intelligence dependent, parallel efforts to pursue dynamic

²³ Hoffman, B. (2004). *Insurgency and Counterinsurgency in Iraq*. Santa Monica, CA: RAND, 3.

²⁴ Schwarz, B. C. (1991). *American Counterinsurgency Doctrine and El Salvador*. Santa Monica, CA: RAND, 22.

²⁵ Hoffman, B. (2004). *Insurgency and Counterinsurgency in Iraq*. Santa Monica, CA: RAND, 8.

military objectives within a nation building environment constantly demand the swift analysis and dissemination of actionable intelligence. In Iraq, deployed US Marine units have also been positioning themselves among the population in their areas of operation whenever possible, in order to “live and work with the Iraqi Police and the Iraqi Civil Defense Corps (ICDC).²⁶ If current and future US nation building efforts are to continue, they must do so with the realization that human beings are key terrain and the conduits of transnational and transcultural issues. Likewise, intelligence professionals in current and future nation building environments must be ready to respond with both time and culturally sensitive analysis, and just as importantly, have the capability to fuse and disseminate the intelligence quickly and correctly.

4. The Maritime Threat

US Navy initiatives to recognize and reduce vulnerabilities to US military units deployed overseas, along with the ongoing execution of maritime and leadership interdiction operations (MIO/LIO) at sea, require the fusion and timely dissemination of intelligence to multinational allies. Moreover, US personnel operating within this global maritime environment must now possess a knowledge of vessels, cargo, crews, and passengers that extends well beyond traditional maritime boundaries.²⁷ Intelligence efforts in this setting frequently depend on native language speakers, language interpreters and detailed, historical databases. US military and intelligence agencies operating in this maritime domain have been augmented through the extensive participation of coalition partners, resulting in an increased opportunity to cooperate and share intelligence in support of counter-terrorism, force protection, homeland security, freedom of navigation and counter-narcotic operations. From the Horn of Africa to Central Asia, embarked multinational forces have drawn on US and allied intelligence sources to impede the smuggling of oil from Iraq, deter the escape of terrorists from

²⁶ Ricks, T. E. “Marines to Offer New Tactics in Iraq: Reduced Use of Force Planned After Takeover from Army,” *Washington Post*, 7 January, 2004.

²⁷ The Subcommittee on Coast Guard and Maritime Transportation. “Hearing on Maritime Domain Awareness.” 6 October 2004. Transcript on-line. Available from <http://www.house.gov/transportation/cgmt/10-06-04/10-06-04r>; Internet; accessed 11 February 2005.

Afghanistan, and clear countless mines from the Arabian Gulf.²⁸ Today and in the future, afloat and ashore US intelligence support elements will be required to surmount technological and linguistic barriers to support a wide variety of maritime missions. These commitments will range from humanitarian, to law enforcement, to military operations and involve the defense of US personnel and property at home and abroad.

C. A NEED FOR A NEW INTELLIGENCE ARCHITECTURE

Independent of time and geographical space, maritime and shore-based scenarios similar to the ones mentioned above must be counted upon to test the very limits of US intelligence capabilities. Therefore, as new adversaries rise to challenge the US military's way of war, intelligence professionals must find more efficient and effective ways of supporting a demanding operational tempo. During a time of unprecedented demands on the US intelligence community, conventional architectures will find it difficult to contend with increasingly complex intelligence requirements because national security no longer depends on stalking one enemy- the Soviet Union. With the return of decentralized enemies, the development of an intelligence architecture that fosters the production and dissemination of intelligence at the tactical level, where US forces are in contact with the enemy, instead of emphasizing support from distant and strategic-level intelligence factories is paramount. Furthermore, the deferral of bureaucratic intelligence requirements until *after* indigenous intelligence architectures are in place can allow US intelligence professionals to gain critical background knowledge and expertise prior to a demand for combat support.

Conflicts in Iraq and Afghanistan have provided the United States with documented proof of the value of human intelligence (HUMINT), and the important balance that must be struck between HUMINT and technical intelligence means within current and future intelligence architectures. The continued dependence on a technology-based intelligence infrastructure is complicated by the sparse conditions of future areas of

²⁸ Lecture address by ADM. Walter F. Doran, Commander US Pacific Fleet, 9 September 2003, 18th Asialink Conference, Melbourne, Australia. Transcript on-line. Available from <http://www.cpf.navy.mil/speech/speeches/030909.html> Internet; accessed 11 February 2005.

conflict and the need for long-term cultural, social, and religious immersion. According to Professor Kalev Sepp, a visit to Iraq in November of 2004 revealed the absence of American intelligence capabilities that acknowledged tribalism, transnational influences, and the multiple layers of an insurgent threat.²⁹ Unconventional conflicts often generate intelligence at the tactical level that must then be conveyed to the decision maker at the strategic level, in effect, from “mud to space.”³⁰ Therefore, the US intelligence community must consider stopping its exclusive reliance on detached intelligence architectures that operate from space down to tactical units on the ground. In order for the US intelligence community to stop being reactive in a combat environment, it must develop an ability to consistently produce intelligence from the battleground-up, disseminate it down to the lowest and most appropriate authority possible, and simultaneously support both military and political decision-makers.

What would or should, this new “mud to space” intelligence architecture look like? The following section proposes a model for a new intelligence architecture in an effort to maintain the US intelligence community several steps ahead of future conflicts and more importantly, increase its ability to provide short and long term support to a wide variety of potential missions.

D. HOW TO BUILD A NEW INTELLIGENCE ARCHITECTURE

Building a new intelligence architecture that can meet current and future threats goes beyond efforts to expand America’s HUMINT capability, increase the number of US Army Special Forces, or reorganize the structure of the US intelligence community. Building a new intelligence architecture requires the development of a proactive and open-minded approach towards new areas of intelligence such as civil affairs, counterinsurgency methods, and information operations. The US intelligence community must develop intelligence architectures that reside within areas of future conflict to

²⁹ Kalev Sepp, interview with the author, Monterey, California, 12 January 2005. Dr. Sepp is currently a faculty member of the Special Operations Low Intensity Conflict Curriculum at the Naval Postgraduate School.

³⁰ USAIC & FH, Six Things Every “2” Must Do, *The Intelligence Officer’s Battlebook: Operation Iraqi Freedom Lessons Learned*. 26 June 2003. Chapter 1, p.13.

collaborate with competing multinational interests, nullify future threats and analyze, instead of report, events. The thorough social-political understanding necessary to produce intelligence overseas has been complicated by an American ignorance of cultural issues, language barriers, a difficulty accessing the populace, and the lack of vetted intelligence sources. Based on a growing movement by the United States to mount an active defense against foreign enemies in the GWOT, areas of future conflict should be expected to offer similar or even greater cultural challenges.

US intelligence architectures designed to fight emerging and prospective threats must be staffed and managed appropriately in order to produce *useful* intelligence. A need to fuse and disseminate specialized intelligence quickly while informing decision-makers at the tactical, operational, and strategic level, demands the participation of regional experts and coalition partners that possess the necessary cultural background and experience. In addition, new intelligence architectures must be:

- Tailored to support dynamic action within the United States or abroad simultaneously. The fluid organizational structure of current and future enemies demands that intelligence analysis compete with the 24-hour news cycle. Moreover, intelligence products must evolve and be refined continuously and quickly, upon an international stage. Intelligence products must be tailored to support broad as well as specific domestic and foreign policies, and defeat a transnational enemy that is no longer tied down by nationality or large orders of battle.
- Geared to perform target development and analysis with greater detail, on multiple levels, and in collaboration with different intelligence disciplines. Terrorists are currently operating in decentralized groups and their ability to move and operate within multiple territories and populated areas can create dynamic targets of opportunity in a matter of minutes. This type of elusive targeting will require the sharing of US intelligence with other countries to conduct and fuse information quickly, mitigate political concerns, and prevent unnecessary physical damage.

- Aware that although timely and accurate intelligence is a necessary condition to defeat asymmetric threats, it is not a substitute for sound military planning that is based on known force capabilities instead of perceived enemy threats. In cases when military institutions may be inclined to fight unconventional enemies using attrition tactics that focus on internal administration, logistics, and operations, new intelligence architectures must recognize an enemy's unconventional capabilities and be prepared to support relational maneuver warfare which focuses on reconfiguring capabilities, manipulating social conditions, and exposing enemy weaknesses.³¹
- Prepared to provide intelligence support that facilitates the efficient and effective use of special operations forces. In addition to providing the intelligence necessary to allow special operation forces to deceive and surprise the enemy, intelligence architectures must recognize that special operations are accomplished with the smallest number of personnel possible, and are dependent on thorough intelligence support to simplify mission tasks and objectives.
- Staffed with US personnel that are trained to disseminate intelligence products to foreign military and civilian entities and embrace the unconventional methods needed to fight terrorism. The US intelligence community can help improve the level of protection for US troops on the ground and increase the relevance of intelligence products by training to work with indigenous forces. These forces possess valuable cultural knowledge and can be supported with the intelligence needed to carry out critical civil affairs missions. Producing specific intelligence products to *maintain* the peace is now as important as producing the intelligence products needed to triumph in war.
- Capable of producing intelligence products that are accessible by not only US and allied forces, but also available to new, non-state customers and non-governmental organizations (NGOs). Future threats to national security will originate from multiple regions, failing states, and non-states because most of the

³¹ Luttwak, E. (1983 December). Notes on Low-Intensity Warfare. *Parameters*, 336.

people who threaten the American way of life plan, train, and operate in countries other than their own. Proper and timely dissemination of intelligence products to familiar coalition partners as well as unfamiliar governments will be essential.

Based on an established need by the US intelligence community to redevelop its focus and introduce an intelligence architecture capable of fighting complicated and multinational threats, military-to-military relations between US and host nation personnel will be examined in the following section, and proposed as a key ingredient in future intelligence architectures. The analysis of US involvement in El Salvador, Colombia, Afghanistan and Iraq performed in support of this argument demonstrates that in time, military-to-military ties can provide US forces with the background and experience necessary to establish and maintain a superior intelligence architecture abroad.

E. ONE SOLUTION: THE USE OF MILITARY-TO-MILITARY RELATIONS IN A NEW INTELLIGENCE ARCHITECTURE

Without effective intelligence on current and future adversaries, the United States will have a difficult time recognizing the threats it is facing, and even less opportunities to focus the resources needed to combat and defeat the enemy. Readers should look no further than the US failure to build a coalition with the government of Sudan, based on the Sudanese offer to allow the extradition of Usama Bin Laden in 1996, as an example of the critical need by the US government and intelligence personnel to understand the language, history, politics, and culture of the area in which they work.³² Therefore, having established the need for a new intelligence architecture based on diffuse threats and elusive enemies, the use of military-to-military relations is proposed as a way to guide the United States into enhanced intelligence efforts, important multilateral operations, and the empowerment of allies in the war against terrorism.

³² Gellman, B. (2001, October 3) U.S. Was Foiled Multiple Times in Efforts To Capture Bin Laden or Have Him Killed; Sudan's Offer to Arrest Militant Fell Through After Saudis Said No; [FINAL Edition], A1. Retrieved February 15, 2005, <http://pqasb.pqarchiver.com/washingtonpost/82945140.html>. Grau, L.W. (2004 July-August). Something Old, Something New: Guerrillas, Terrorists, and Intelligence Analysis. *Military Review*, 44.

Anyone considering the use of military-to-military relations as a vehicle to increased intelligence capabilities must first be warned. A review of available research reveals that these relationships, although capable of improving intelligence efforts, require a long-term investment of trained and experienced personnel, professional as well as personal patience, honesty, and rarely produce immediate gains. In El Salvador and Colombia, military-to-military relations, although initially difficult, proved to be fertile ground for the establishment of intelligence sharing agreements after several years. Moreover, these relations eventually supported US regional policy objectives and increased the counterinsurgency capabilities of the indigenous military forces. In Afghanistan, the participation of indigenous Northern Alliance forces provided the indigenous forces needed by US Special Operations Forces to conduct efficient ground maneuvers and call for well-directed fires against the enemy.³³

Two years after the beginning of Operation Iraqi Freedom, Iraq remains an example of the consequences resulting from the absence of military relations between members of the US-led coalition and compliant Iraqi forces. Instructions given by the head of the Coalition Provisional Authority (CPA) to dissolve the Iraqi military infrastructure prevented US forces from fully incorporating newly trained Iraqi security forces into a comprehensive, long-term national security system.³⁴ Meanwhile, the unsupervised introduction of coalition forces into the Iraqi tribal balance of power after the fall of the Saddam Hussein regime markedly upset native social-political patterns and irrevocably altered the security environment.³⁵ In the post-Saddam era, US forces have been able to develop and maintain military-to-military ties with experienced and trustworthy Iraqi military personnel with mixed results. Arguably, the absence of a military-to-military relationship in Iraq following the fall of Baghdad proved to be yet

³³ Biddle, S. (2002). *Afghanistan and the Future of Warfare: Implications for Army and Defense Policy*. Strategic Studies Institute. Pennsylvania: US Army War College, viii.

³⁴ McCallister, W.S. (2003 February). *Integrated Security System: Requirement for a Well Reasoned Tribal Policy*, 20. Paper forwarded by COL David S. Maxwell, USA, SF.

³⁵ McCallister, W.S. (2003 February). *Integrated Security System: Requirement for a Well Reasoned Tribal Policy*, 7. Paper forwarded by COL David S. Maxwell, USA, SF.

another lost opportunity for US forces in desperate need of greater situational awareness and better insight into complex social, political and tribal systems.

Nonetheless, the Global War on Terrorism continues to be fought in socially and politically compromised countries similar to those found in the Middle East and Latin America, possessing inconsistent state, financial and military resources. Most of the countries in these regions are unprepared or incapable of effectively waging counterinsurgency or counterterrorism efforts, which under optimal circumstances, require extended periods of training and preparation. Proactive US efforts to seek out areas of future conflict in order to establish military-to-military relations can help US analysts identify key indicators of unrest, target the person or persons that threaten a peaceful way of life, and select appropriate courses of action prior to, or instead of, the onset of hostilities. Military-to military relations can help US forces in their need to expand their linguistic capabilities, develop necessary databases, and effectively participate with current and future coalition partners. Dedicated military ties in the form of an intelligence sharing agreement, a joint intelligence center, or an advisory program can help the US intelligence community establish local, ground to space intelligence networks that offer host nations increased intelligence capabilities in exchange for much needed regional expertise. In fact, the use of military to military relationships can guide the US intelligence community back to that overlooked but essential request to redevelop its focus.

F. CONCLUSION

The enclosed recommendations may seem intuitive and may, in one way or another, be already in place. However, over two years after the beginning of Operation Iraqi Freedom in March 2003, US news outlets continue to report that attacks against US troops deployed overseas occur on a daily basis. These terrorist acts should be seen as the successful culmination of the enemy's plans and therefore, demand the implementation of more effective means in order to stop them. In this age of globalization, events such as commodity smuggling, terror sponsorship, insurgency movements, and humanitarian catastrophes are not just a host nation or state problem. The development of new

intelligence architectures and the use of military-to-military relations can enable partner nations, nullify future threats through the use of proactive instead of reactive efforts, and will do more than paint a visually pleasing picture of the area of operations; it will prevent the enemy from eventually defining the global battlespace.

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III. EL SALVADOR: A GHOST OF INTELLIGENCE SHARING PAST

A. INTRODUCTION

In order to determine whether an emphasis on military-to-military relationships can advance future intelligence efforts, the involvement of the United States military in El Salvador has been examined using a discerning eye. Situations encountered by US military personnel in El Salvador offer both positive and negative examples of how to successfully implement intelligence-sharing programs through established combined military training. Consequently, this case study presents many of the procedures and challenges encountered by US forces in El Salvador in an effort to provide guidelines for proactive, operational engagement of current and future military allies. There are numerous and obvious differences between the situation in El Salvador and more recent conflicts in Iraq and Afghanistan. Nonetheless, in principle, there are several similarities. The author of this case study considers the civil war in El Salvador as an earlier attempt by the United States to pursue three goals sought in Iraq and Afghanistan: the support of a new democratic institution, the successful training of capable indigenous forces, and a desire for increased intelligence capabilities.

The outcome of US military involvement during the civil war in El Salvador has been described as nothing more than a lucky accident, a fortunate outcome accomplished by a core group of people amidst a deplorable situation.³⁶ Although numerous anecdotal examples regarding the use of intelligence techniques by both US and Salvadoran forces were encountered during the compilation of this case study, only examples validated as unclassified through published open media sources have been included. As demonstrated in the following text, US strategy in El Salvador made the establishment of an intelligence architecture through military collaboration a necessity.³⁷ Placing the

³⁶ Cesar Sereseres, interview with the author, Monterey, California, 6 May 2004. Mr. Sereseres is currently a Political Science Professor at University of California Irvine.

³⁷ For purposes of this thesis, an intelligence architecture is defined as an organized intelligence apparatus, a structured environment in which intelligence disciplines, capabilities, and procedures are deployed in support of selected civilian and/or military requirements.

American involvement in El Salvador within the context of current and future US military commitments can expose significant parallels and more importantly, offer valuable lessons learned. The importance of defining the intelligence needs of the host nation, the value of proactively identifying a counterpart's intelligence capabilities, and the benefits of a decent and open military-to-military relationship are lessons that survived this civil war. Subsequently, the *value* of training and establishing a military-to-military relationship with the El Salvadoran Armed Forces (ESAF) will be explored as a way to avoid intelligence shortfalls in future.

B. US POLICIES IN EL SALVADOR

Since its inception, the civil war in El Salvador presented a great foreign policy concern for the United States. In 1979, the overthrow of the Somoza government and the subsequent victory of the Marxist-oriented Sandinista movement in Nicaragua was seen by the United States as a threat to the development of democracy in Central America. After years of oligarchic rule and social crisis, a subsequent military coup in October of 1979 left the leadership of the El Salvadoran Armed Forces divided, but in control of the civilian government. By 1980, a bloody civil war between government forces and the Marxist Farabundo Marti National Liberation Front (FMLN) was underway. The end of the civil war was marked by the signing of a peace accord in 1992 and, based on subsequent records, claimed an estimated one hundred thousand lives.³⁸ Relative to the political climate of the 1980's, US strategic concerns in the region became significant enough to commit US economic assistance and military personnel to the Central American conflict. According to the authors of *Lessons for Contemporary Counterinsurgencies: The Rhodesian Experiment*, between 1980 and 1990, the United States spent more than \$4.5 billion in El Salvador (\$1.3 billion in the form of direct military assistance, and over \$850 million dollars in unsubsidized credits). In addition, author Bruce Hoffman, reported that the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) spent an

³⁸ Corum, J.S. (1998, Summer). The air war in El Salvador. *Aerospace Power Journal*, 1. Retrieved February 1, 2005, from <http://www.airpower.maxwell.af.mil/airchronicles/apj/apj98/sum98/su98.html>

estimated \$500 million dollars to support the Salvadoran government, promote democracy, and prevent the establishment of a communist regime.³⁹

Prior to President Ronald Reagan's commitment to provide financial and logistical assistance to the government of El Salvador in 1981, ignorance and denial among US government officials had shaped American policies without the fidelity needed to address El Salvador's unique counterinsurgency problems.⁴⁰ In the years that followed and aside from the stated objective to contain the spread of communism in Central America, US policies in El Salvador continued to lack well-defined, comprehensive objectives due to ideological differences between the US administration and elements within the Salvadoran regime.⁴¹ For example, the United States often saw the Government of El Salvador's tacit adoption of counterinsurgency policies and acceptance of diplomatic and financial aid as a willingness to reverse decades of undemocratic rule.⁴² In reality, American policies to modernize the Salvadoran institutions often clashed with diplomatic efforts to reform the country's social infrastructure, and antagonized local political factions eager to gain or maintain political control. Through an apparent sin of foreign policy omission, the United States did not sufficiently consider the character, culture, and political structure of Salvadoran society, which, after decades of rampant corruption and violence, had become habituated to subsist within an authoritarian state. Consequently, US military personnel initially struggled to help secure a military and social victory for El Salvador due to the lack of a comprehensive plan of action by the US government, and the congressionally mandated pairing of counterinsurgency strategies with American foreign policy mandates.⁴³

³⁹ Waghelstein, J.D. (1985, January) El Salvador: Observations and Experiences in Counterinsurgency. Study Project published by the US Army War College, Carlisle Barracks, PA, 61.

⁴⁰ US Department of State, Central America: Defending Our United Interests, (1983), 4. The Joint Low Intensity Conflict Project (1986) describes the objectives of the Reagan's comprehensive strategy towards El Salvador, 3-5 and 3-6.

⁴¹ Schwarz, B. C. (1991). *American Counterinsurgency Doctrine and El Salvador*. Santa Monica, CA: RAND, 73.

⁴² Schwarz, B. C. (1991). *American Counterinsurgency Doctrine and El Salvador*. Santa Monica, CA: RAND, 72.

⁴³ Schwarz, B. C. (1991). *American Counterinsurgency Doctrine and El Salvador*. Santa Monica, CA: RAND, 81.

Nonetheless, the diplomatic relationship between the United States and El Salvador evolved and improved over time. Influenced in large part by individual personalities, this relationship was also assisted by the ESAF's open relationship with their US counterparts, the propagation of moderate political beliefs within the Salvadoran political system, and the insurgency's inability to achieve large-scale popular support.⁴⁴ Only two years after the 1981 deployment of US Mobile Training Teams (MTTs), a focus by both US advisors and the El Salvadoran military on the need to use civil affairs measures to rebuild Salvadoran society and re-gain public trust had begun.⁴⁵ With the help of US personnel, a National Campaign Plan (NCP) that analyzed Salvadoran military strategy, considered the economic aspects of the civil war, and focused on helping the civilian population had been developed by the Salvadoran government.⁴⁶ Despite continuous and sometimes tense diplomatic relations, the government of El Salvador slowly recognized and adjusted to its role in the service of the Salvadoran population. However, the social and military complexities of the civil war in El Salvador made it clear that democratic success at the political and diplomatic level would not be enough. The Armed Forces of El Salvador had traditionally been heavily involved in the corrupt and previously authoritarian political process. With the dawning of a civil war, the conventionally-minded ESAF faced more than American attempts to institute democracy; it faced a highly motivated, well-equipped, unconventional enemy.

⁴⁴ US Navy Intelligence Liaison Officer, interview conducted by the author, Monterey, California, 26 January 2005. Currently a senior officer in the US Naval Intelligence community, he served as chief of a technical analysis team upon reporting to El Salvador in 1987. Jose Eduardo Angel, Gen., Retired, interview with the author, San Salvador, El Salvador, 29 December 2004. Gen. Angel served as Commander of the Atlacatl Battalion until 1992 and was the Vice-Minister of Defense until his retirement from the Salvadoran Army in 2000.

⁴⁵ Valenzuela, A., Rosello, Victor. (2004, March-April). Expanding Roles and Missions in the War on Drugs and Terrorism: El Salvador and Colombia. *Military Review*, 28.

⁴⁶ Waghelstein, J.D. (1985, January) El Salvador: Observations and Experiences in Counterinsurgency. Study Project published by the US Army War College, Carlisle Barracks, PA, 53. Despite the fact that COL (Ret.) Waghelstein goes on to describe how the plan experienced very limited success, the NCP should be considered a solid example of how American military relations successfully resulted in providing both military and non-military assistance to their Salvadoran counterparts.

C. ESAF MILITARY CULTURE AND THE ESTABLISHMENT OF MILITARY-TO-MILITARY RELATIONS

A review of available evidence concerning ESAF military culture and US military involvement in El Salvador during the civil war indicates that military-to-military relations were instrumental in training and modernizing El Salvador's Armed Forces. The following paragraphs will discuss how US logistical, training and collaboration efforts with Salvadoran military personnel resulted in an increase in the ESAF's combat effectiveness, and consequently, improved both US and Salvadoran intelligence capabilities. Research conducted in support of this case study has validated the previously documented fact that prior to the civil war, the ESAF was a predominantly garrison-bound, moderately effective fighting force that lacked the motivation to look beyond a conventional warfighting strategy. Officers serving in the Salvadoran Army felt comfortable relying on large set piece maneuvers and artillery support during clashes with insurgent groups during the initial stages of the civil war. According to the "Report of the El Salvador Military Strategy Assistance Team (also known as "The Woerner Report"), "only dramatic restructuring and the adoption of more aggressive counterinsurgency tactics could turn the Salvadoran military into an effective fighting force."⁴⁷ More importantly, within the ESAF organization, there was little if any connection between intelligence gathering, combat operations, civic action programs, and winning popular support.⁴⁸

From a logistical perspective and based on the initial unwillingness by several ESAF senior officers to "change," US advisers created a parallel military establishment within the existing ESAF that was devoid of the prevalent conventional and institutionalized mentality.⁴⁹ US military personnel, some of them still able to recall the counterinsurgency lessons learned during the Vietnam War, were quick to encourage senior ESAF counterparts to forego large-unit operations and adapt to operations in the

⁴⁷ Department of Defense, Report of the El Salvador Military Assistance Team (Draft), 16 November 1981

⁴⁸ Waghelstein, J.D. (1985, January) El Salvador: Observations and Experiences in Counterinsurgency. Study Project published by the US Army War College, Carlisle Barracks, PA, 49.

⁴⁹ Cesar Sereseres, interview with the author, Monterey, California, 6 May, 2004 and 31 January, 2005.

small, highly mobile units required to find and engage insurgent fighters. The progression of the ESAF under US military tutelage eventually culminated in the establishment of multiple, US trained and equipped counterinsurgency battalions. Trained by US Army Special Forces MTTs, these quick reaction forces were mobilized to fulfill counterinsurgency missions while the original Salvadoran forces were relegated to more static, infrastructure protection roles.⁵⁰

Despite the unrest in El Salvador from 1979 to 1981, the ESAF (which at the time numbered approximately 17,000 military and paramilitary personnel) had failed to address the need for an expanded officer corps and was only producing 25 to 45 officers per year.⁵¹ Therefore, in order to support a new counterinsurgency strategy that revolved around small unit operations, the ranks of ESAF commissioned and non-commissioned officers were strengthened. By 1984, the United States maintained a large training center east of the country's capital city in order to provide Salvadoran recruits basic military training.⁵² US advisers gradually instructed their host-nation counterparts on the importance of defeating insurgent forces by military as well as civil means, emphasizing the importance of the winning popular support. Varying levels of American political support for the government of El Salvador at the diplomatic level routinely affected military-to-military relations throughout the civil war. For example, as a matter of policy, the American government tied the continuation of US logistical and financial aid to the ESAF's observance and preservation of human rights. Similarly, periods of unpredictable or insufficient US funding resulted in ammunition shortages and training stoppages that caused established Salvadoran battalions to be overworked or, not work at all.⁵³

⁵⁰ Waghelstein, J.D. (1985, January) El Salvador: Observations and Experiences in Counterinsurgency. Study Project published by the US Army War College, Carlisle Barracks, PA, 41.

⁵¹ Waghelstein, J.D. (1985, January) El Salvador: Observations and Experiences in Counterinsurgency. Study Project published by the US Army War College, Carlisle Barracks, PA, 39. Corum, J.S. (1998, Summer). The air war in El Salvador. *Aerospace Power Journal*, 14.

⁵² Schwarz, B.C. (1991). *American Counterinsurgency Doctrine and El Salvador*. Santa Monica, CA: RAND, 20.

⁵³ Waghelstein, J.D. (1985, January) El Salvador: Observations and Experiences in Counterinsurgency. Study Project published by the US Army War College, Carlisle Barracks, PA, 45.

However, despite obstacles in the development of a different military culture, strong military-to-military ties between the United States and El Salvador emerged and evolved. Through the efforts and perseverance of many US and Salvadoran military personnel, the political, cultural, and ideological differences were superseded by numerous training successes. The ESAF slowly gained proficiency in counterinsurgency operations, thanks to the development of units such as the Long Range Reconnaissance Patrols (known in Spanish as PRALs). These units were trained and equipped in Panama by the 7th Special Forces Group, accounted for hundreds of guerrilla casualties, and were instrumental in the collection of valuable tactical, operational, and strategic level intelligence.⁵⁴ Moreover, despite training and logistical shortfalls, the proficiency of pilots in the Salvadoran Air Force improved with the help of US Air Force advisors and was successful in keeping guerrilla forces dispersed.⁵⁵ Today, former members of the ESAF now regard US human rights policies and the sensitivity training provided by the US personnel as responsible for humanizing Salvadoran forces during and after the civil war.⁵⁶

The intent of this case study is not to focus entirely on the successes and failures that shaped the professional collaboration between US and Salvadoran forces, but to present the military-to-military relations formed during the civil war as instrumental in the development of improved intelligence capabilities. In order to better understand the US military's challenging but successful development of military-to-military relations with ESAF personnel and the subsequent development of a better intelligence architecture, the structure and role of the US military adviser program must be discussed in further detail.

⁵⁴ Waghelstein, J.D. (1985, January) El Salvador: Observations and Experiences in Counterinsurgency. Study Project published by the US Army War College, Carlisle Barracks, PA, 45.

⁵⁵ Corum, J.S. (1998, Summer). The air war in El Salvador. *Aerospace Power Journal*, 15. Retrieved February 1, 2005, from <http://www.airpower.maxwell.af.mil/airchronicles/apj/apj98/sum98/su98.html>

⁵⁶ Jose Eduardo Angel, Gen., Retired, interview with the author, San Salvador, El Salvador, 29 December 2004.

D. US ADVISERS IN EL SALVADOR

The decision by the United States to send military advisers to El Salvador during the early years of the civil war in El Salvador was proof of the US administration's commitment to help the government of El Salvador defeat a Marxist insurgency. In addition to millions of dollars in financial and logistical aid, the US commitment to El Salvador included the assignment of mid-level and senior US military commissioned and non-commissioned officers to work directly with Salvadoran counterparts at various levels within the ESAF. Although this American detachment was predominantly composed of US Army personnel, it included members of every US service branch. With images of the increasing commitment of US troops during Vietnam, Congress arbitrarily placed a tacit 55-person limit on the number of military members that could be assigned at any one time to what became known as the US Military Group El Salvador (USMILGPES).⁵⁷ In El Salvador, as well as any other country where the United States chooses to commit advisers, the number of US personnel assigned is critical. Although several publications reviewed for this project state that the assignment of only 55 advisers to El Salvador precluded greater MTT deployments, others assert that the intent of maintaining a small number of US advisers was instrumental in minimizing the US presence while maximizing the opportunities for Salvadorans to solve their own problems.⁵⁸ During the civil war, the number of US advisers in El Salvador commonly rose above the 55-member limit. This was due in large part to the constant arrival and departure of temporarily assigned personnel who, exempted by Congress from their mandated 55- person limit, participated in humanitarian missions, medical efforts, and military training teams. According to interviews conducted by the author of this case study, the total number of US advisers in El Salvador at any one time averaged approximately 200.

Service tours for assigned US advisers varied in length but in general, averaged from 6 to 12 months. In addition to assignment duration, the linguistic capabilities and

⁵⁷ Valenzuela, A., Rosello, Victor. (2004, March-April). Expanding Roles and Missions in the War on Drugs and Terrorism: El Salvador and Colombia. *Military Review*, 29.

⁵⁸ Waghelstein, J.D. (1985, January) El Salvador: Observations and Experiences in Counterinsurgency. Study Project published by the US Army War College, Carlisle Barracks, PA, 47.

levels of expertise in Latin American affairs fluctuated among US personnel. This fact was not lost on senior ESAF officers who often questioned the US commitment to El Salvador based on the disparity of leadership experience, personal commitment, and professional behavior observed in their American trainers.⁵⁹ Despite ideological differences concerning counterinsurgency doctrine and the ESAF's prevailing military culture, initial Salvadoran perceptions of US interference in host nation affairs gave way to years of open and productive military-to-military interaction.⁶⁰ US military advisers in El Salvador provided infantry, artillery, aviation, intelligence, counterinsurgency, and civil affairs training to Salvadoran counterparts located throughout ESAF headquarters and subordinate commands. Involvement of US advisers in the operations and intelligence sections in each one of the ESAF's six infantry brigades generally motivated US-trained and equipped Salvadoran forces to leave their garrisons and proactively engage insurgent forces.⁶¹ The mission of American advisers in El Salvador was to support their Salvadoran counterparts in establishing training programs and to assist in decision-making processes regarding military, staff, intelligence, and operational matters.⁶² According to Salvadoran officers interviewed for this thesis, US advisers (a.k.a. trainers) did not overtly appear to be involved in the planning of overall campaign. ESAF's perception of a bilateral military relationship where US advisers remained focused on providing training and logistical support, while strategic planning was left to Salvadoran decision makers, empowered ESAF leadership and strengthened US and Salvadoran relations.⁶³

⁵⁹ Jose Eduardo Angel, Gen., Retired, interview with the author, San Salvador, El Salvador, 29 December 2004.

⁶⁰ Jose Eduardo Angel, Gen., Retired, interview with the author, San Salvador, El Salvador, 29 December 2004.

⁶¹ Valenzuela, A., Rosello, Victor. (2004, March-April). Expanding Roles and Missions in the War on Drugs and Terrorism: El Salvador and Colombia. *Military Review*, 28.

⁶² Valenzuela, A., Rosello, Victor. (2004, March-April). Expanding Roles and Missions in the War on Drugs and Terrorism: El Salvador and Colombia. *Military Review*, 28.

⁶³ Jose Eduardo Angel, Gen., Retired, interview with the author, San Salvador, El Salvador, 29 December 2004.

USMILGPES' role in establishing military ties with Salvadoran counterparts at multiple echelons was critical in an American struggle to professionalize, modernize, and train the ESAF to develop better intelligence capabilities. For example, the US decision to expand ESAF's unconventional warfighting capability by creating BIRIs (Immediate Reaction Infantry Brigades), while simultaneously assigning advisers at the brigade level to assist and report on the process, proved to be one of the decisive factors behind the ESAF's successful engagement of insurgent forces and subsequent collection of intelligence.⁶⁴ The millions of dollars managed by USMILGPES and used to build facilities, train forces, and modernize the ESAF's order of battle impressed Salvadoran military officers and removed many doubts concerning the seriousness of the United States commitment to El Salvador. According to the four US Army Colonels that wrote the report *American Military Policy in Small Wars: The Case of El Salvador*, "the Salvadoran case shows that the United States can broadly employ the leverage of security assistance to redirect behavior."⁶⁵

The improvement of the ESAF's capabilities and combat readiness as a result of USMILGPES' sponsored training and support was impressive and readily apparent.⁶⁶ However, US military involvement in El Salvador was not without its difficulties and detractors. For example, despite the fact that both countries share a common hemisphere and many Western cultural traits, difficulties encountered by US advisers in trying to expand non-commissioned officers ranks or teach human rights underscored some of the difficulties encountered when trying to implement institutional changes. Dr. Benjamin Schwarz, author of a 1991 RAND report on El Salvador states that American policy during the civil war was hampered by the prospect of conditionality. According to Schwarz, the US would state publicly that it would withdraw support from the El Salvador government if it did not see reform, while continually affirming through policy

⁶⁴ US Navy Intelligence Liaison Officer, interview conducted by the author, Monterey, California, 26 January 2005.

⁶⁵ Bacevich, A., Hallums, J., White, R., Young, T., (1988) *American Military Policy in Small Wars: The Case of El Salvador*. Massachusetts: Pergamon-Brassey's, 26.

⁶⁶ Jose Eduardo Angel, Gen., Retired, interview with the author, San Salvador, El Salvador, 29 December 2004.

statements that it would not allow an insurgency to achieve victory in El Salvador.⁶⁷ The author states that the result of this “flawed” policy was evident in American advising efforts, which at times deviated from training intended to promote the importance of winning national popular support, in order to instill democratic ideals on Salvadorans who were content within an authoritarian and polarized society.

Based on all of the verbal and written accounts reviewed for the purpose of compiling this case study, the US military adviser program in El Salvador is collectively categorized as a success. The operational vision of many US military personnel assigned to El Salvador filled a void created by the uncertainties of US foreign policy and established a mutually beneficial military-to-military relationship. Although a review of available literature reveals that American advisory efforts to reform the ESAF, convert selected Salvadoran forces into capable counterinsurgency units, develop successful civil affair programs, and increase intelligence capabilities often achieved mixed results, the fact that US advisory efforts also contributed to significant US policy victories cannot be denied. In 1981, over 10,000 political murders were committed and linked to units in the Salvadoran military and paramilitary forces.⁶⁸ According to Schwarz report, in 1990 this was reduced to 108 such murders. The increasing human rights awareness exhibited by the ESAF throughout the civil war must be attributed in large part to the efforts of US advisers and should be considered a valuable legacy of the military-to-military relations established in El Salvador.⁶⁹

US Military Group El Salvador continued to operate until the signing of the peace accords in December of 1992.⁷⁰ Despite language and cultural differences, differences in doctrine and military training, and Salvadoran perceptions that often qualified the American “can-do” spirit as arrogance, the performance of US advisers in El Salvador is

⁶⁷ Schwarz, B.C. (1991). *American Counterinsurgency Doctrine and El Salvador*. Santa Monica, CA: RAND, vii.

⁶⁸ Schwarz, B.C. (1991). *American Counterinsurgency Doctrine and El Salvador*. Santa Monica, CA: RAND, 23.

⁶⁹ Jose Eduardo Angel, Gen., Retired, interview with the author, San Salvador, El Salvador, 29 December 2004.

⁷⁰ Valenzuela, A., Rosello, Victor. (2004, March-April). Expanding Roles and Missions in the War on Drugs and Terrorism: El Salvador and Colombia. *Military Review*, 29.

characterized by Former ESAF officers as professional, successful, and prudent. Interviews conducted in support of this compilation reveal that Salvadoran officers in retrospect feel that without the financial, logistical, and professional help of the United States, El Salvador would have fallen into Communist hands.⁷¹ The low-key presence of US advisers in El Salvador was due in large part to an attempt by the US government to limit the number US advisers in El Salvador as a way to avoid endangering American personnel and similarly “Americanize” the war. However, despite political and cultural constraints, many US advisers were able to recognize that operations in El Salvador had to be driven by intelligence, and determined that the ESAF could not develop a successful counterinsurgency strategy without the existence of a fully functioning intelligence sharing program.

E. US INTELLIGENCE COOPERATION PROGRAMS IN EL SALVADOR

Like their operational colleagues, US military intelligence personnel were assigned by US Southern Command to work directly with their Salvadoran counterparts at various echelons within the ESAF.⁷² US military intelligence personnel were tasked to oversee and manage intelligence support to the ESAF and their duties included the coordination of analytical efforts, daily briefs to the ESAF general staff, and continuous bilateral collaboration with ESAF intelligence personnel. The status of military intelligence capabilities of the ESAF were categorized as “grave” by American standards, based on the ESAF’s inability to collect, analyze, fuse, and disseminate intelligence.⁷³ Therefore, initial US intelligence efforts in El Salvador originated in both the Central American Joint Intelligence Team (CAJIT) located at the Pentagon, and US Southern Command Headquarters located in Panama. As with any multi-national, military operation, initial efforts to coordinate and share intelligence between the Pentagon, US

⁷¹ Jose Eduardo Angel, Gen., Retired, interview with the author, San Salvador, El Salvador, 29 December 2004.

⁷² US Navy Intelligence Liaison Officer, interview conducted by the author, Monterey, California, 26 January 2005.

⁷³ Bacevich, A., Hallums, J., White, R., Young, T., (1988) *American Military Policy in Small Wars: The Case of El Salvador*. Massachusetts: Pergamon-Brassey’s, 30.

Southern Command, US personnel in El Salvador, and intelligence personnel within the ESAF were difficult and inexpedient.⁷⁴ An intelligence fusion process that involved distinct political and military organizations and a fluid insurgent situation often challenged these entities. Moreover, a lack of tactical intelligence, bureaucratized reporting and inefficient dissemination methods, often resulted in the production of intelligence with broad degrees of usefulness and accuracy.⁷⁵ Nonetheless, the ability by US intelligence personnel to process large volumes of data using multiple technological means, and the open relationship steadily established between American and Salvadoran personnel, eventually resulted in the production of a common intelligence picture that focused on the FMLN.⁷⁶

By 1983, the CAJIT and the Defense Intelligence Agency (DIA) provided target folders and aerial platform intelligence support from Panama and Honduras to Salvadoran military intelligence units on a regular basis through previously established bilateral military relations.⁷⁷ The intelligence directorate within US Southern Command provided strategic intelligence to senior ESAF personnel, while US and Salvadoran intelligence personnel on the ground collaborated within advisory teams to support El Salvador's director of military intelligence.⁷⁸ Similar to operations in Afghanistan and Iraq, the United States' ability to combat unconventional forces in unfamiliar territory such as El Salvador was restricted by the US intelligence community's over-dependence on technology. In reference to the limitations of technology in a dynamic combat environment, a former US Military Group Commander in El Salvador confirmed that "Early on, we [US military advisers] were very much intent upon using platforms almost

⁷⁴ Bacevich, A., Hallums, J., White, R., Young, T., (1988) *American Military Policy in Small Wars: The Case of El Salvador*. Massachusetts: Pergamon-Brassey's, 30.

⁷⁵ Cesar Sereseres, interview with the author, Monterey, California, 31 January, 2005.

⁷⁶ Bacevich, A., Hallums, J., White, R., Young, T., (1988) *American Military Policy in Small Wars: The Case of El Salvador*. Massachusetts: Pergamon-Brassey's, 30.

⁷⁷ Valenzuela, A., Rosello, Victor. (2004, March-April). Expanding Roles and Missions in the War on Drugs and Terrorism: El Salvador and Colombia. *Military Review*, 29.

⁷⁸ Valenzuela, A., Rosello, Victor. (2004, March-April). Expanding Roles and Missions in the War on Drugs and Terrorism: El Salvador and Colombia. *Military Review*, 29.

exclusively, but the effectiveness of those platforms was reduced considerably.”⁷⁹ Therefore, in El Salvador, US military intelligence personnel increasingly focused on the importance of working with the host nation to determine the methods and tools necessary to collect and exploit intelligence in the Salvadoran environment ⁸⁰

Based on the dynamics of a counterinsurgency, the intelligence architecture established in cooperation with the ESAF during the civil war was fluid but not without its flaws. The gradual importance assumed by human intelligence disciplines over numerous technological means demanded that experienced US military intelligence personnel constantly revise the ways in which intelligence was being collected to ensure that these methods remain effective, and more importantly, capable of producing useful intelligence.⁸¹ Personnel fluctuations within the US military intelligence cadre due to congressional limits and scheduled personnel rotations did not go unnoticed by Salvadoran counterparts, and made any efforts to maintain analytical as well as intellectual continuity within military relationships difficult and critical. Based on the unconventional and diffuse nature of the insurgency in El Salvador, initiatives that relied too heavily on signals and optical intelligence often achieved poor results.⁸² In some cases, intelligence successfully collected by US intelligence assets during the Salvadoran conflict still remained of little operational use, unless properly fused with other intelligence disciplines in order to build an accurate and timely intelligence picture.⁸³ However, according to interviews conducted in support of this project, initiatives such as the establishment of Regional Intelligence Centers (RICs) facilitated military-to-military relations and with time, proved to be more successful.

⁷⁹ Bacevich, A., Hallums, J., White, R., Young, T., (1988) *American Military Policy in Small Wars: The Case of El Salvador*. Massachusetts: Pergamon-Brassey's, 31.

⁸⁰ US Navy Intelligence Liaison Officer, interview conducted by the author, Monterey, California, 26 January 2005.

⁸¹ US Navy Intelligence Liaison Officer, interview conducted by the author, Monterey, California, 26 January 2005.

⁸² US Navy Intelligence Liaison Officer, interview conducted by the author, Monterey, California, 26 January 2005.

⁸³ US Navy Intelligence Liaison Officer, interview conducted by the author, Monterey, California, 26 January 2005.

Regional Intelligence Centers were established by national intelligence agencies in specific areas throughout El Salvador and collocated with previously established military and law enforcement headquarters.⁸⁴ Similar in function to present-day US Joint Intelligence Centers (JICs), RICs served as centers for the collection, analysis, fusion, and dissemination of intelligence. Based on a US need to train Salvadoran intelligence officers to carry out critical intelligence preparation of the battlespace and multi-intelligence discipline analysis, RICs became the cornerstone in a valuable effort to develop actionable intelligence, extend intelligence efforts, increase intelligence capabilities, and support decision-makers. RIC operators provided valuable information that was disseminated throughout ESAF and US intelligence channels. In any military-to-military relationship, trust between nations and credibility are paramount. RICs became places where Salvadoran and US personnel collaborated to produce intelligence that could be used at the tactical level quickly and without bureaucratic delay.⁸⁵ Of note, the staffing of regional intelligence centers (RICs) and USMILGPES with US military personnel that belonged to the same military service and military occupational specialty, provided a common organizational and professional denominator, and unintentionally provided an additional link between strategic (USMILGPES) and operational (RICs) level military operations. The successful analysis conducted by US and Salvadoran intelligence units demonstrated the importance of validating and tailoring intelligence products to the ongoing conflict and the needs of the host nation counterpart.⁸⁶ An analysis of the intelligence-sharing relationship between the United States and El Salvador shows that careless dissemination of intelligence products derived from technologically advanced intelligence platforms can often surpass the host nation's capability to process these products. For example, the dissemination of imagery laden target folders to host nation counterparts by US personnel may at first appear to be helpful, but in the end, prove useless against a decentralized insurgency that does not

⁸⁴ US Navy Intelligence Liaison Officer, interview conducted by the author, Monterey, California, 26 January 2005.

⁸⁵ Cesar Sereseres, interview with the author, Monterey, California, 31 January 2005.

⁸⁶ US Navy Intelligence Liaison Officer, interview conducted by the author, Monterey, California, 26 January 2005.

hold terrain or maintain an order of battle. In El Salvador, developing an intelligence program was only part of a successful intelligence cooperation solution; determining the use of intelligence once it was collected was the other part, and perhaps the most important part of addressing the needs of the Salvadoran forces.⁸⁷ Every intelligence piece has value; the challenge is finding its usefulness and integrating it into its proper place. It is the successful combination of intelligence assets and customer needs in El Salvador that eventually exemplified the importance of tailoring the intelligence provided to the needs and capabilities of the host nation. Notwithstanding the high demand US and Salvadoran decision-makers placed on intelligence during the civil war, research also reveals that the military-to-military relationships within the RICs often surpassed strategic level, technology based, intelligence efforts by facilitating the attack of insurgents with fused and timely intelligence products at the tactical level.

During the civil war in El Salvador, a majority of the US intelligence support provided to the ESAF originated from two strategic sources: US national intelligence agencies working within El Salvador and the CAJIT.⁸⁸ At the tactical and operational level, personnel assigned to US national intelligence agencies operated within El Salvador as both the administrators and financial backers of intelligence collection platforms such as the AC-130 aircraft, the PRALs, and RICs with varying levels of success.⁸⁹ Likewise, the CAJIT actively modified their targeting support and rearranged organizational structures to improve tactical situation reports and produce actionable intelligence products.⁹⁰ The lengthy development of capable military-to-military relations appear to have taken its toll on attempts by multiple US national agencies to simultaneously develop a responsive intelligence architecture in El Salvador. Personal interviews conducted in support of this case study reveal that only after approximately five years following President Reagan's 1981 commitment to the government of El

⁸⁷ US Navy Intelligence Liaison Officer, interview conducted by the author, Monterey, California, 26 January 2005.

⁸⁸ Cesar Sereseres, phone interview with the author, Monterey, California, 14 March 2005. Jose Eduardo Angel, Gen., Retired, interview with the author, San Salvador, El Salvador, 29 December 2004.

⁸⁹ Cesar Sereseres, phone interview with the author, Monterey, California, 14 March 2005.

⁹⁰ Cesar Sereseres, phone interview with the author, Monterey, California, 14 March 2005.

Salvador, were the rules governing the American-Salvadoran military relationship considered sufficiently modified by US military advisers to permit a welcoming and nurturing intelligence sharing relationship.⁹¹

The intelligence sharing relationship established with the United States military personnel motivated ESAF personnel to eventually reject political rumors and unsubstantiated reports in favor of professional analysis. However, a constant supply of US intelligence support also inadvertently caused Salvadoran military personnel to become dependent on US intelligence support. In fact, within the military-to-military relationship established between the United States and El Salvador, the demonstrated capability of US intelligence products during the Salvadoran conflict became a new form of US political currency. Based on the ESAF's growing dependency on US intelligence support, some US military advisers and politicians saw the control and disclosure of potent US intelligence products as a way to influence Salvadoran counterparts.⁹² The use of intelligence as a way to force change within the ESAF clouded the effectiveness of military-to-military relationships by unwittingly calling into question Salvadoran desires for reform. Fortunately, the use of intelligence by American advisers as a way to positively motivate Salvadoran counterparts to become more capable in the battlefield seems to have eventually become the norm.⁹³ The improvement of means by which the United States provided strategic intelligence to the ESAF, the eventual establishment of rules governing bilateral agreements, and the proper administration of intelligence inside and outside El Salvador proved to be essential to American and Salvadoran cooperation and ultimately reinforced military-to-military relations.

Enough research has been conducted in support of this case study to determine that military-to-military relations between the United States and El Salvador were a vehicle for improved intelligence sharing. An analysis of available classified and unclassified information demonstrates that through military-to-military relations, the ESAF significantly improved its military and intelligence infrastructure. Although the

⁹¹ Cesar Sereseres, phone interview with the author, Monterey, California, 14 March 2005.

⁹² Cesar Sereseres, phone interview with the author, Monterey, California, 14 March 2005.

⁹³ Cesar Sereseres, phone interview with the author, Monterey, California, 14 March 2005.

intelligence capabilities and procedures used by the United States in El Salvador frequently changed based on a dynamic military and political climate, the military-to-military relationships established between US and Salvadoran military and intelligence professionals during the 1980's and early 1990's provided common ground and endured. The physical presence of US military personnel in ESAF operations centers and brigade headquarters was key and fostered the effective fusion of intelligence. This improvement in intelligence capabilities was also based on efforts by both US military intelligence professionals and their Salvadoran counterparts to maintain a direct and open working relationship.⁹⁴ In fact, US intelligence personnel stationed in El Salvador during the civil war enjoyed great access within the ESAF once US motives and participation within the intelligence process were accepted by Salvadoran counterparts.⁹⁵ The importance of defining the intelligence needs of the host nation, the value of proactively identifying a counterpart's intelligence capabilities, and the benefit of a decent and open military-to-military relationship are credited by those interviewed for this report as essential to US efforts during the civil war in El Salvador. The author of this project assesses that the application of these lessons to military-to-military relations today can increase the opportunities for US operational and intelligence success in the future.

F. CONCLUSION

For the United States, El Salvador's legacy reappears in Iraq like the ghost of nation-building past, at a time when American instruments of policy once again find themselves actively supporting a government's struggle against a violent insurgent force. El Salvador has been one of many stops along the contentious path of American nation-building efforts. The parallels drawn by cases such as that of El Salvador can provide a pragmatic opportunity to analyze past, present, and future US military involvement in foreign soil, and plan for what appears to be a recurring nation-building mission. As

⁹⁴ US Navy Intelligence Liaison Officer, interview conducted by the author, Monterey, California, 26 January 2005.

⁹⁵ US Navy Intelligence Liaison Officer, interview conducted by the author, Monterey, California, 26 January 2005.

previously demonstrated in El Salvador during the 1980's, decisions made in Afghanistan and Iraq today will render consequences throughout the international stage for years to come.

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IV. COLOMBIA: INTELLIGENCE AND INFORMATION SHARING IN THE PRESENT

A. INTRODUCTION

American foreign policy, the quality of a host nation's military force, and operational security are several key issues that must be considered, often concurrently, when evaluating any military-to-military relationship and/or information sharing program. This case study analyzes the role of military-to-military relations between American and Colombian personnel as a vehicle for information sharing, in the context of Colombia's battle against insurgent forces. Although open source reporting constantly refers to an *intelligence* sharing agreement between the United States and Colombia, United States Southern Command (USSOUTHCOM) officially describes its relationship with Colombian counterparts as a mutual sharing of *information*.⁹⁶ For the purposes of this chapter, relations between the United States and Colombia will be referred to as either information or intelligence sharing agreements based directly on the terminology used by the referenced source. When not specifically citing a reference source, the relationship between the United States and Colombia will be cited as an information sharing agreement in deference to guidance set by the Foreign Disclosure Office USSOUTHCOM. A discussion of the military-to-military relationship between the United States and Colombia is limited by the security classifications associated with any type of active intelligence or information sharing agreement and the inherent sensitivity of ongoing political and military relations. Although these factors preclude the unclassified use of very detailed examples to describe relations with US host nations such as Colombia, enough research has been conducted in support of this case study to determine that military-to-military relations between the United States and Colombia have been, and continue to be, a vehicle for improving intelligence and information sharing.

⁹⁶ Interview of USSOUTHCOM Foreign Disclosure Office (FDO) personnel conducted by the author, USSOUTHCOM Headquarters, Miami, Florida, 23 March 2005.

In situations where US personnel are limited in the amount of information they can share with host nation personnel due to security classification protocols, this case study advocates the use of military-to-military relations as a medium by which a host nation's cooperation can be reciprocated. For example, US military personnel can acknowledge the information provided by their host nation counterparts by establishing programs designed to improve the host nation's intelligence capabilities. The creation of programs in which host nation information sharing gestures are answered with programs that encourage military personnel from both countries to train and answer intelligence requirements together, fosters feelings of trust between counterparts and can lead to future and more meaningful exchanges of information. A review of US and Colombian military-to-military relations also demonstrates that US personnel can be in a unique position to recognize, and if necessary, sensitize Colombian counterparts to the counter-productive nature of risk-averse behavior, and prevent this behavior from becoming an obstacle to better information sharing opportunities. As previously documented in the Salvadoran case study, military-to-military relationships between US and Colombian personnel have thrived when they have remained free from the effects of political agendas and when information was not used as currency to reward or punish non-conformity to US policy. Finally, Colombia's use of police forces as well as the existence of non-military, national security forces, and police officers in neighboring countries such as Costa Rica and Panama serve as a reminder that military-to-military relationships should not be limited to military entities. The following review of American and Colombian policies is designed to introduce the institutions involved in information sharing, and to later describe how the United States and Colombia can use military-to-military relations, information sharing, and the recommendations listed above to mutually strengthen their ongoing security relationship.

B. US POLICIES IN COLOMBIA

Colombia is the fourth largest country in South America and its geography extends from remote jungle hinterlands to the lofty peaks of the Andes Mountains.⁹⁷ The

⁹⁷ Compton's Interactive Encyclopedia Deluxe, 1998, The Learning Company, Inc., Colombia.

primary insurgent threat in Colombia is attributed to the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC) and the National Liberation Army (ELN). Over the years, these insurgent forces along with other illegally armed groups (IAGs) have targeted civilians for kidnapping, coerced coca-leaf growers into surrendering their illicit crops, and subjected commercial farmers to illegal taxation of their farming profits.⁹⁸ Moreover, media reports detail how FARC and ELN forces routinely attack police stations, private and public enterprises, national infrastructure, and military installations throughout the country on a daily basis. In addition to the insurgent threat, an initially pro-government paramilitary force known as the Colombian United Self-Defense Forces (AUC) has been operating since the 1970's. Originally established to protect the personal and financial interests of wealthy Colombian landowners, the AUC have now asserted themselves as a political and military force. Membership estimates for the FARC, ELN, and paramilitary army vacillate among official and unofficial sources. However, the combined combat power of these forces is consistently regarded by Colombian military sources and USSOUTHCOM personnel to be large enough to sporadically control multiple sectors of the country at any given time.⁹⁹

In 1989, the President of the United States George H. Bush promoted intelligence sharing as part of a broader militarization of America's war on drugs.¹⁰⁰ In an effort to eradicate a resilient drug trade and increase their combat capabilities, the Colombian government formally requested the assistance of the United States in February of 1990.¹⁰¹ In a meeting with the President of the United States, the leaders of Bolivia, Peru, and Colombia agreed to exchange American economic aid for increased regional efforts

⁹⁸ Getting in Deeper: The United States' growing involvement in Colombia's conflict. Adam Isacson. February 2000. The Center for International Policy. ISSN 0738-6508, pp.3.

⁹⁹ Interview of Colombia Military Branch personnel conducted by the author, USSOUTHCOM Headquarters, Miami, Florida, 23 March 2005.

¹⁰⁰ U.S. Drug Policy & Intelligence Operations in the Andes. Michael L. Evans. June 2001. The Foreign Policy in Focus (FPIF) Project. Reproduced courtesy of Foreign Policy in Focus—A Think Tank Without Walls. Retrieved August 26, 2004 from http://www.americaspolicy.org/briefs/2001/body_v6n22andes.html

¹⁰¹ Ratte, Jr, J.E. (2002). *United States Drug Enforcement Policy in Colombia: Conflict of Priorities in Controlling the Flow of Cocaine to the United States*. National Defense University, National War College. Washington D.C.: U.S., pp. 3.

to defeat the drug trade. Nonetheless, in the years following this meeting, US personnel working in cooperation with Colombian authorities were not allowed to transfer information on guerrilla activity if it was not specifically related to counter-drug operations. Terms like “Narco-Terror” and “Narco-Guerrillas” began to emerge, making it even more difficult for US personnel to consistently differentiate between counter-drug and counter-insurgency support. In 1993, the Presidential Administration of William J. Clinton published Presidential Decision Directive 14, which resulted in an Air Bridge Denial Program that since 1995 has used military intelligence and civilian assets to track suspect aircraft throughout the Andean region.¹⁰² According to Adam Isacson, author of an International Report detailing the United States’ growing involvement in Colombia’s conflict, a meeting between US Defense Secretary William Cohen and his Colombian counterpart in December of 1998 laid the groundwork for the expansion of joint military cooperation. Under provisions of the National Authorization Act, over thirty Special Forces teams deployed to Colombia in 1999 and were responsible for the training of over 1,500 Colombian forces.¹⁰³ During the same year, US guidelines were expanded to allow the dissemination of intelligence related to guerrilla activity within known drug producing regions.¹⁰⁴

General Peter Pace, Commander of USSOUTHCOM from 2000 to 2001, recognized the need to exchange information with other countries and testified before a congressional committee in March of 2001 that the ability to execute effective operations was hampered by restrictions on sharing data with our partner nations. Furthermore, he recommended that the United States should “streamline sharing procedures that are

¹⁰² U.S. Drug Policy & Intelligence Operations in the Andes. Michael L. Evans. June 2001. The Foreign Policy in Focus (FPIF) Project. Reproduced courtesy of Foreign Policy in Focus—A Think Tank Without Walls. Retrieved August 26, 2004 from http://www.americaspolicy.org/briefs/2001/body_v6n22andes.html

¹⁰³ Getting in Deeper: The United States’ growing involvement in Colombia’s conflict. Adam Isacson. February 2000. The Center for International Policy. ISSN 0738-6508, pp.5.

¹⁰⁴ U.S. Drug Policy & Intelligence Operations in the Andes. Michael L. Evans. June 2001. The Foreign Policy in Focus (FPIF) Project. Reproduced courtesy of Foreign Policy in Focus—A Think Tank Without Walls. Retrieved August 26, 2004 from http://www.americaspolicy.org/briefs/2001/body_v6n22andes.html

currently used for time sensitive counter-drug information.”¹⁰⁵ Following the terrorist attacks on the United States on September 11, 2001, the political belief that drugs and terrorism in Colombia were a threat to hemispheric security intermeshed with an increased awareness by the United States of terrorism’s global reach.¹⁰⁶ In the past, Congress had repeatedly resisted expanding the role of US forces in Colombia based on accounts of human rights violations by Colombian forces and reports of collusion between right-wing paramilitaries and the Colombian military.¹⁰⁷ However, Colombian President Andres Pastrana’s labeling of the FARC as “terrorists” in February of 2002 further compelled the US administration to contemplate an increased role in Colombia.¹⁰⁸ By spring of 2002, legislative efforts were underway at the behest of United States’ President George W. Bush to petition Congress for “expanded authority” to utilize US aid to Colombia as part of an American campaign against narcotics trafficking and terrorist activities.¹⁰⁹ Based on the drafting of a new National Security Directive and after Congressional consideration, this re-definition of the Colombian conflict was approved under new guidelines governing the foreign disclosure of US intelligence and in support of efforts to prosecute the Global War on Terrorism.¹¹⁰ In addition, the FARC, ELN, and AUC were officially designated by the United States Secretary of State as Foreign

¹⁰⁵ U.S. Drug Policy & Intelligence Operations in the Andes. Michael L. Evans. June 2001. The Foreign Policy in Focus (FPIF) Project. Reproduced courtesy of Foreign Policy in Focus—A Think Tank Without Walls. Retrieved August 26, 2004 from http://www.americaspolicy.org/briefs/2001/body_v6n22andes.html

¹⁰⁶ Scarborough, R. (2003 December 8). U.S. Helps Colombia Take Down Guerrillas. *The Washington Times*. Retrieved July 29, 2004 from <http://www.washingtontimes.com/national/20031208-123627-3411r.htm>.

¹⁰⁷ DeYoung, K. (2002 February 22) Colombia to get Aid in Fighting Insurgents; U.S. Will Increase Intelligence-Sharing. *The Washington Post*, pp.A17.

¹⁰⁸ DeYoung, K. (2002 February 22) Colombia to get Aid in Fighting Insurgents; U.S. Will Increase Intelligence-Sharing. *The Washington Post*, pp.A17.

¹⁰⁹ Testimony of Peter W. Rodman, Assistant Secretary of Defense for International Security Affairs, Department of Defense, April 11, 2002. Retrieved April 5, 2005, from <http://www.ciponline.org/colombia/02041104.htm> and <http://www.house.gov/internationalrelations/rodm0411.htm>

¹¹⁰ Scarborough, R. (2003, December 8). U.S. Helps Colombia Take Down Guerrillas. *The Washington Times*. Retrieved July 29, 2004 from <http://www.washingtontimes.com/national/20031208-123627-3411r.htm>.

Terrorist Organizations (FTOs).¹¹¹ During his tenure as Commander of USSOUTHCOM, General James Hill labeled the activities of Colombian narco-terrorists as one of the threats against US national security and enemies of democratic reform.¹¹² Following the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001 and as it stands today, American foreign policy in Colombia reflects the ongoing effort of the United States to defeat terrorism worldwide.

Despite the general desire by the Colombian Military (COLMIL) to bring the conflict to a decisive end, the national government struggles with limited resources due to ongoing budgetary constraints. The fight against crime and terrorism has bolstered the Colombian government's quest for lasting peace and steady economic progress. Charges of corruption, human rights abuses, and paramilitary involvement against Colombian authorities have resulted in safeguards to insure that the dissemination of information generated from US/Colombia sharing agreements is carefully monitored. To the United States, American involvement in Colombia is seen as a way to safeguard military and economic interests within the Andean region, and more importantly the Western Hemisphere. Regardless of opinion or terminology, current US policy has recognized the overlap of Colombian drugs and terrorism, and in concert with the American commitment to destroy global terrorism, all but guarantees that the sharing of information between the US and Colombia will continue indefinitely.

C. COLMIL CULTURE AND THE ESTABLISHMENT OF MILITARY-TO-MILITARY RELATIONS

Research and interviews conducted in support of this case study reveal that, overall, the military-to-military relationship between Colombian and US military personnel has served as a very good medium to acquire and exchange information. Comments by General Bantz Craddock during his Senate confirmation hearing as Commander of USSOUTHCOM in 2004 demonstrated his commitment to “maintain and

¹¹¹ Sullivan, M.P. (2005). *Latin America: Terrorism Issues* (Congressional Research Service [CRS] Report for Congress Order Code RS21049). Washington D.C.: U.S. Library of Congress.

¹¹² US Southern Command (SouthCom) Struggles to Justify its Role in the War on Terror. Equipo Nizkor. September 2004. Retrieved on March 22, 2005 from <http://www.derechos.org/nizkor/terror/counter.html>. The analysis was prepared by Eleanor Thomas and Lindsay Thomas, COHA Research Associates, Council on Hemispheric Affairs, Washington, D.C.

broaden our (US) consistent military-to-military contacts as means of irrevocably institutionalizing the professional nature of those militaries with which we have worked so closely over the past several decades.”¹¹³ The composition of the Colombian Army has in fact, changed rapidly over the last fifteen years and resulted in a more professional and more educated military organization.¹¹⁴ US personnel familiar with the COLMIL characterize it as comprised of conscripts who in some cases have surpassed challenging entrance requirements, succeeded in receiving quality training, and gradually earned better payment for their service.¹¹⁵ The Colombian Non-Commissioned Officer Corps has a centralized education system, and in 2005 implemented a Command Sergeant Major promotion system.¹¹⁶

The increased professionalism of the younger members of the Colombian military forces has encouraged better military-to-military relations with their US counterparts. Nonetheless, many senior Colombian officers still cling to outmoded military traditions that socially and professionally segregate enlisted troops from officers. Interviews of US personnel directly involved in military-to-military relationships with Colombian counterparts state that sometimes operational tempo, inter-service cooperation and the sharing of information can be easily degraded by the selfish aspects of the old COLMIL culture.¹¹⁷ According to these sources, a desire to preserve situational status quo, existing turf battles, and competitiveness amongst service peers have been enough to prevent some Colombian personnel from sharing information with each other, and more importantly, developing and fusing the available information into intelligence

¹¹³ US Southern Command (SouthCom) Struggles to Justify its Role in the War on Terror. Equipo Nizkor. September 2004. Retrieved on March 22, 2005 from <http://www.derechos.org/nizkor/terror/counter.html>

¹¹⁴ Personal electronic communication with COL (Ret.) Jim “Ranger” Roach, USA on April 10, 2005. COL Roach is a former commander of 7th Special Forces Group and was also assigned to Colombia as a US Defense Attaché from 1990-1992. Currently, COL Roach works in Colombia as a US Embassy liaison.

¹¹⁵ Personal electronic communication with COL (Ret.) Jim “Ranger” Roach, on April 10, 2005.

¹¹⁶ Personal electronic communication with COL (Ret.) Jim “Ranger” Roach, on April 10, 2005.

¹¹⁷ Interview of Colombia Military Branch personnel conducted by the author, USSOUTHCOM Headquarters, Miami, Florida, 23 March 2005.

products.¹¹⁸ Notwithstanding, US personnel who have witnessed these types of relations consider themselves to be in a unique position to not just recognize, but if necessary, sensitize Colombian counterparts to the counterproductive nature of this risk-averse behavior, and the benefits of maintaining the lines of information exchange open.

The execution of joint operations has also proven to be a challenge to the military culture of the continuously expanding COLMIL. The difficulties imposed by lingering inter-service rivalries have increased the level of difficulty already associated with joint operations and in some cases, hampered the free exchange of information between countries. Efforts to achieve joint interoperability are being made thanks to the reorganization of the COLMIL under President Alvaro Uribe Velez, a slow but self-imposed shift in the Colombian institutional mindset, and the US sponsored enhancement of Colombian military and technological capabilities.¹¹⁹ For, example, Colombian military divisions and their staffs have been reorganized to accommodate the participation of the Colombian Army, Navy, and Air Force. Moreover, the Colombian military commander has also been directed to reorganize the COLMIL into more capable joint regional commands.¹²⁰ As noted by William B. Wood, US ambassador to Colombia in 2004, “the cooperation and coordination between US and Colombian forces could be better, and within the COLMIL, rivalries between forces jeopardize efforts to coordinate operations and share resources.”¹²¹

D. US TRAINERS IN COLOMBIA

The goal of American military trainers in Colombia is to empower their foreign counterparts with an ability to build up their country’s capabilities. It has been a process of long term engagement founded on a history of personal ties and relationships.

¹¹⁸ Interview of Colombia Military Branch personnel conducted by the author, USSOUTHCOM Headquarters, Miami, Florida, 23 March 2005.

¹¹⁹ Interview of Colombia Military Branch personnel conducted by the author, USSOUTHCOM Headquarters, Miami, Florida, 23 March 2005.

¹²⁰ Personal electronic communication with COL (Ret.) Jim (Ranger) Roach, on April 10, 2005.

¹²¹ Statement of William B. Wood, US Ambassador to Colombia during the retirement of Colombian Flag Officers on October 14, 2004. Retrieved on March 22, 2005 from <http://usembassy.state.gov/colombia/wwws0076.shtml>

Presently, joint military cooperation and training seems to be aimed at the elimination of the insurgents and narco-traffickers residing in remote drug producing areas of Colombia. Since 2000, The United States government has provided the government of Colombia with approximately \$2.6 billion dollars of logistical and financial aid within a foreign assistance package called PLAN COLOMBIA.¹²² A large majority of this aid has arrived in Colombia in the form of equipment and the military advice needed to combat narco-traffickers, guerrillas, and paramilitaries and resulted in the creation of three mountain battalions, two mobile brigades, twelve special forces anti-terrorist teams, three anti-kidnapping squadrons, twelve rifle squadrons, and substantial increases in personnel serving within the Colombian military and police forces.¹²³ A July 2004 article by *Washington Times*' journalist Rowan Scarborough stated that the current US administration's expanded role for military trainers in Colombia "has started to pay dividends with the capture and killing of senior guerrilla leaders in Colombia."¹²⁴

Based on unclassified sources, the number of US military personnel maintaining an American presence in Colombia since the 1990's has averaged between 250 and 300, consisting mostly of Army and Navy personnel.¹²⁵ In 2002, Congress passed a law expanding US involvement in Colombia. This legislation authorized an increase in the number of military trainers involved in support of Plan Colombia, from 400 to 800 by 2004.¹²⁶ These numbers did not include the participation of approximately 600 civilian contractors, US law enforcement personnel, and US Government Service employees.¹²⁷

¹²² Colombia: No Estamos Solicitando Tropas Extranjeras. Guarino Caicedo. March 2005. El Diario La Prensa On-line. Retrieved on March 18, 2005 from <http://eldiariolaprensa.com/noticias>

¹²³ Colombia: No Estamos Solicitando Tropas Extranjeras. Guarino Caicedo. March 2005. El Diario La Prensa On-line. Retrieved on March 18, 2005 from <http://eldiariolaprensa.com/noticias>

¹²⁴ Scarborough, R. (2003, December 8). U.S. Helps Colombia Take Down Guerrillas. *The Washington Times*. Retrieved July 29, 2004 from <http://www.washingtontimes.com/national/20031208-123627-3411r.htm>.

¹²⁵ Getting in Deeper: The United States' growing involvement in Colombia's conflict. Adam Isacson. February 2000. The Center for International Policy. ISSN 0738-6508, pp.2.

¹²⁶ Interview with Major Jose Roodettes, USAF, conducted by the author, USSOUTHCOM Headquarters, Miami, Florida, 22 March 2005. Information also available in the online article US Southern Command (SouthCom) Struggles to Justify its Role in the War on Terror. Equipo Nizkor. September 2004. Retrieved on March 22, 2005 from <http://www.derechos.org/nizkor/terror/counter.html>

¹²⁷ Hearing from the House Government Reform Committee on The War, Drugs and Thugs: A Status Report on Plan Colombia Successes and Remaining Challenges, June 17, 2004, pp.34.

Much of the day-to-day military training of Colombian military elements is primarily carried out by the US Army's 7th Special Forces Group based in Fort Bragg, North Carolina. Referred to as "instructors" and/or "trainers," these service members train Colombian counterparts in counter-drug detection, reconnaissance, indirect fire, light infantry tactics, medical skills, human rights, and intelligence-gathering techniques.¹²⁸

The United States Military Group in Colombia (USMILGROUPCO) administers USSOUTHCOM initiatives within Colombia and oversees operational, logistic, and training developments within the COLMIL on a regular basis, enjoying a close and well-established relationship with its Colombian counterparts.¹²⁹ The USMILGROUP Commander maintains relationships with US Embassy, USSOUTHCOM, and Colombian military headquarters personnel and is required to oversee the flow of people both visiting and on assignment to Colombia. US sponsored military training also occurs through Planning and Assistance Training Teams (PAT Teams). These operational teams are composed of experienced US military and civilian personnel and are tasked to help Colombian tactical-level commanders identify and resolve training deficiencies at the division level.¹³⁰ In addition to deploying with host nation commanders and assisting them with the development of the training plans necessary to improve Colombian battlefield capabilities, imbedded PAT Team members and trainers are able to observe, analyze, and report first hand on the condition of the Colombian military system.¹³¹ In several Colombian departments, the reported cooperation between several American agencies and Colombian forces has resulted in the positive advance of an "important

¹²⁸ Getting in Deeper: The United States' growing involvement in Colombia's conflict. Adam Isacson. February 2000. The Center for International Policy. ISSN 0738-6508 P.5 and statement of General Charles E. Wilhelm, USMC, Commander, US Southern Command before the Senate Armed Services Committee, 7 March 2000.

¹²⁹ Interview of Colombia Military Branch personnel conducted by the author, USSOUTHCOM Headquarters, Miami, Florida, 23 March 2005.

¹³⁰ Interview of Colombia Military Branch personnel conducted by the author, USSOUTHCOM Headquarters, Miami, Florida, 23 March 2005.

¹³¹ Interview of Colombia Military Branch personnel conducted by the author, USSOUTHCOM Headquarters, Miami, Florida, 23 March 2005.

campaign against numerous targets.”¹³² Reminiscent of the allocation of US personnel seen in El Salvador, the establishment of a US military group within the host nation, the deployment of mobile assistance teams, and the assignment of trainers at division and/or brigade levels within the COLMIL, has improved the ability of both Colombian and American military personnel to coordinate and exchange information.

E. US INFORMATION SHARING PROGRAMS IN COLOMBIA

The information sharing program between the United States and Colombia is described by USSOUTHCOM personnel as an American military and political effort to help Colombian military personnel help themselves. Through the years, this information sharing program has evolved to help Colombian personnel communicate better with each other and with other units in the field.¹³³ A review of some of the initiatives and methods by which the United States and Colombia have shared information is useful to demonstrate the role of military-to-military relations in bilateral efforts to improve their strategic, operational, and tactical intelligence picture.

An early showpiece of the US/Colombia intelligence partnership during the 1990’s was the Colombian Joint Intelligence Center (COJIC). During its existence, this center operated in the FARC-contested area of Tres Esquinas, in the province of Caqueta, and was co-located with a US-trained counter-narcotics battalion and what is now designated as the 6th Colombian Army (COLAR) division headquarters.¹³⁴ Despite the protests of people who saw its existence as a challenge to Colombian sovereignty, the COJIC supported Colombian authorities with real-time targeting information, terrain and weather analysis, force protection vulnerability assessments, and intelligence estimates.¹³⁵ In statements made in March of 2000, the Commander of USSOUTHCOM

¹³² Statement of William B. Wood, US Ambassador to Colombia during the retirement of Colombian Flag Officers on October 14, 2004. Retrieved on March 22, 2005 from <http://usembassy.state.gov/colombia/wwws0076.shtml>

¹³³ Interview of USSOUTHCOM Foreign Disclosure Office (FDO) personnel conducted by the author, USSOUTHCOM Headquarters, Miami, Florida, 23 March 2005.

¹³⁴ Phone interview of Colombia Desk Officer, Joint Chiefs of Staff (JCS) Pentagon, 23 March 2005.

¹³⁵ Statement of General Charles E. Wilhelm, USMC, Commander in Chief, US Southern Command before the Senate Armed Services Committee, 7 March 2000.

General Wilhelm stated that the goal of the COJIC was to provide Colombian armed forces and police units with quality, integrated intelligence support.¹³⁶ Following the reorganization of Colombian forces in recent years and based on a decision to operate against the FARC in other remote areas, the COJIC at Tres Esquinas was eventually closed. However, bilateral analysis continues, since most of its intelligence assets have been transferred to support operations at Colombian Joint Task Force (JTF) Omega and Colombian Army Regional Intelligence Center 8 (RIME 8) in Florencia, the capital city of Caqueta.¹³⁷

In early 2000, open source reports stated that five US radar facilities had been installed in Colombian territory to assist national forces with the detection of drug-smuggling activity.¹³⁸ US presence and assistance at these sites was reported to have been capable of providing “real-time” aerial tracking assistance to the Colombian authorities and was said to have been instrumental in the interdiction of drug smuggling planes since 1990.¹³⁹ Thanks to the development of special intelligence handling caveats, the US Department of Defense through the National Geospatial Intelligence Agency provides detailed maps, while the National Security Agency monitors communications and electronic signals.¹⁴⁰ If needed, operational planning, coordination and supervision can be carried out at SOUTHCOM or at Joint Interagency Task Force South (JIATF-SOUTH), which housed the now defunct Joint Southern Surveillance and

¹³⁶ Statement of General Charles E. Wilhelm, USMC, Commander in Chief, US Southern Command before the Senate Armed Services Committee, 7 March 2000.

¹³⁷ Personal electronic communication with COL (Ret.) Jim “Ranger” Roach, on April 10, 2005.

¹³⁸ Getting in Deeper: The United States’ growing involvement in Colombia’s conflict. Adam Isacson. February 2000. The Center for International Policy. ISSN 0738-6508, pp.2.

¹³⁹ Statement of General Charles E. Wilhelm, USMC, Commander in Chief, US Southern Command before the Senate Armed Services Committee 7, March 2000.

¹⁴⁰ U.S. Drug Policy & Intelligence Operations in the Andes. Michael L. Evans. June 2001. The Foreign Policy in Focus (FPIF) Project. Reproduced courtesy of Foreign Policy in Focus—A Think Tank Without Walls. Retrieved August 26, 2004
http://www.americaspolicy.org/briefs/2001/body_v6n22andes.html

Reconnaissance Operations Center (JSSROC) and was responsible for the fusion and dissemination of aerial, ground, and radar intelligence.¹⁴¹

The information sharing relationship between the United States and Colombian military has not been without its problems. In an effort to mitigate deeper US involvement and American casualties, current US policy regarding Colombia defers to the host country's security forces as the agents responsible for acting on any produced intelligence. This can result in a limitation on the amount of control the United States has on provided information and in the past has resulted in tragedy. In the spring of 2001, the Bush Administration suspended intelligence flights over Colombia after an air force jet in neighboring Peru, acting on US intelligence, fired on a civilian aircraft suspected of smuggling drugs, killing an American missionary and her daughter.¹⁴² However, by the end of 2003, Colombia had resumed a thoroughly vetted and robustly staffed Air Bridge Denial Program that in the last two years has been directly responsible for the seizure of over ten metric tons of cocaine.¹⁴³ US military commitments abroad have put a greater demand on the limited US intelligence, reconnaissance, and surveillance assets normally assigned to track the increasing threat of terrorism and drug trafficking activity in Colombia. According to General Craddock, "the means to achieve persistent Intelligence Surveillance and Reconnaissance (ISR) presence throughout the entire area of operations (AOR) remains a concern."¹⁴⁴ Critics of US involvement in Colombia see the ongoing drug and insurgent violence throughout Colombia as yet another opportunity to tie down already heavily committed American forces and capabilities. Moreover, accusations of inappropriate and irresponsible involvement of US personnel in Colombia continue to be

¹⁴¹ U.S. Drug Policy & Intelligence Operations in the Andes. Michael L. Evans. June 2001. The Foreign Policy in Focus (FPIF) Project. Reproduced courtesy of Foreign Policy in Focus—A Think Tank Without Walls. Retrieved August 26, 2004 from http://www.americaspolicy.org/briefs/2001/body_v6n22andes.html

¹⁴² Evans, M. (2001, April 23). Shootdown in Peru: The Secret U.S. Debate Over Intelligence Sharing with Peru and Colombia. *The National Security Archive*. Retrieved March 8, 2004, from <http://www.gwu.edu/~nsarchiv/NSAEBB/NSAEBB44/index2.html>

¹⁴³ Statement of General Bantz J. Craddock, USA, Commander US Southern Command before the 109th Congress House Armed Services Committee, 9 March 2005.

¹⁴⁴ Statement of General Bantz J. Craddock, USA, Commander US Southern Command before the 109th Congress House Armed Services Committee, 9 March 2005.

levied against American officials as reports that Colombian military and civilian individuals with established ties to US intelligence organizations have been found guilty of corruption, bribery, state-sponsored terrorism, and human rights abuses.

The information cited above reveals a complex and gradually evolving security relationship in which Colombian President Uribe's administration has risen to the counterinsurgency challenge, and the United States has been accepted as a committed ally. Recently, military-to-military relations between the United States and Colombia have been responsible for the establishment of training methods designed to increase the quantity and quality of information exchanged between the two countries.¹⁴⁵ For example, military-to-military relations have been instrumental in the establishment of electronic collaboration networks and tools that allow Colombian and US forces to share information in faster and easier ways, across great geographic distances and throughout multiple command echelons within the COLMIL.¹⁴⁶ Moreover, software programs such as Falcon View Mapping and efforts to develop imagery mapping indexes, have been identified by sources as systems that show potential to be of great utility to US and Colombian forces in the future.¹⁴⁷

The global nature of the war on terrorism and the logistical limitations of US forces make it difficult for the United States to establish a significant military presence in multiple places at once for extended periods of time. Therefore, information sharing programs between the United States and Colombia as described above are notable examples of how military-to-military relations and subsequent information sharing practices can act as a force multiplier by addressing US foreign policy concerns at the source. However, in addition to politics and the quality of a military force, significant operational security issues must be considered when using military-to-military relationships as a vehicle for improved intelligence or information sharing.

¹⁴⁵ Interview of USSOUTHCOM Foreign Disclosure Office (FDO) personnel conducted by the author, USSOUTHCOM Headquarters, Miami, Florida, 23 March 2005.

¹⁴⁶ Interview of USSOUTHCOM Foreign Disclosure Office (FDO) personnel conducted by the author, USSOUTHCOM Headquarters, Miami, Florida, 23 March 2005 and statement of General Charles E. Wilhelm, USMC, Commander in Chief, US Southern Command before the Senate Caucus on International Narcotics Control, 21 September 1999.

¹⁴⁷ Personal electronic communication with COL (Ret.) Jim (Ranger) Roach, on April 10, 2005.

F. THE REALITIES OF AN ACTIVE INFORMATION AND INTELLIGENCE SHARING PROGRAM

An information sharing relationship between the United States and any foreign country (to include Colombia) is dependent on many foreign disclosure laws, handling policies, and security protocols. The exchange of highly classified intelligence or sensitive information between two parties is always subject to compromise based on the risks inherent to the careless handling of the intelligence, the potentially corrupt nature of the individuals involved, and the possible use of shared information for unauthorized purposes. As a result, American willingness to support nations in distress such as Colombia is continuously put to the test when the bilateral flow of information within these military-to-military relations is frustrated by American inabilities to turn over information based on the security classification of the source. The foreign disclosure process managed by US intelligence agencies is notoriously complex and slow, and has been categorized in many cases by persons interviewed for this case study as an impediment to military-to-military relations. Therefore, in many cases the ability of US intelligence professionals to reciprocate the intelligence and information sharing gestures made by certain host nations must unfortunately be regarded as limited.

Throughout the Colombian conflict, COLMIL personnel have experienced significant operational security problems and lapses.¹⁴⁸ Therefore, US personnel are often unable to substantially reciprocate the host nation's information sharing gesture due to restrictions correctly imposed by US foreign disclosure laws. These laws have been designed to prevent the compromise of sensitive intelligence materials due to carelessness, corruption, espionage, and ignorance. Unfortunately, these limitations in many cases also prevent military-to-military relations from becoming truly bilateral, and complicate the development of trust associated with the delicate exchange of information. This stumbling block has been recognized by General Craddock, who in testimony before Congress, identified the United States' inability to "share sensitive intelligence information with US interagency partners and with partner nations in a timely manner" as

¹⁴⁸ Personal electronic communication with COL (Ret.) Jim (Ranger) Roach, on April 10, 2005.

a particular challenge.¹⁴⁹ As previously stated in a discussion on new intelligence architectures, the current inability of US intelligence organizations to produce intelligence products that are accessible by not only US and coalition forces, but also available to willing state or non-state actors endangers the finite good will of current and future host nation counterparts.

In recognition of these foreign disclosure laws, US trainers and their Colombian counterparts have created programs specifically geared towards the *joint* collection and dissemination of tactical information.¹⁵⁰ For example, focused US mentorship and cooperation with the Colombian National Police's Anti-Narcotics Division has resulted in the development of the unit's own targeting capability and intelligence infrastructure.¹⁵¹ This type of program empowers the host nation and mitigates foreign disclosure issues because intelligence and information is produced jointly, and not exchanged or requested from US assets. These programs also steer away from the centralized, top-down, dissemination of information and instead advocate decentralized planning and execution of operations by Colombians at lower echelons with access to US logistical support. The Colombian ability to share information with US forces at the tactical level by way of a program tailored to their specific needs proves that with planning, information sharing agreements and stringent US security requirements can coexist between US and host nations.¹⁵² Furthermore, interviewed sources confirm that, as previously documented in the Salvadoran case study, military-to-military relationships between US and Colombian personnel have thrived when they have remained free from the effects of political agendas and when information was not used as currency to reward support or punish non-conformity to US policy.¹⁵³

¹⁴⁹ Statement of General Bantz J. Craddock, USA, Commander US Southern Command before the 109th Congress House Armed Services Committee, 9 March 2005.

¹⁵⁰ Interview of Colombia Military Branch personnel conducted by the author, USSOUTHCOM Headquarters, Miami, Florida, 23 March 2005.

¹⁵¹ Personal electronic communication with COL (Ret.) Jim "Ranger" Roach, on April 10, 2005.

¹⁵² Interview of USSOUTHCOM Foreign Disclosure Office (FDO) personnel conducted by the author, USSOUTHCOM Headquarters, Miami, Florida, 23 March 2005.

¹⁵³ Interview of International Cooperation Division personnel conducted by the author, USSOUTHCOM Headquarters, Miami, Florida, 22 March 2005.

US personnel involved in a relationship hampered by the inability to disclose classified information should also consider reciprocating partner nation gestures of cooperation with offers to help their counterparts develop the analytical skills necessary to enhance their military and intelligence capabilities. Colombian military intelligence has been characterized as unsophisticated by author Andres Villamizar, based on a reported lack of international or geopolitical experts that can effect true analysis, an inability to track external threats, and a failure to exploit open source intelligence.¹⁵⁴ The reciprocation of a host nation's cooperation with dedicated programs run by qualified US personnel and designed to teach counterparts how to collect and analyze their own intelligence can empower the host nation, increase the capabilities and situational awareness of both countries, and help integrate operations. Training host nation counterparts to fuse multiple intelligence disciplines, develop and understand intelligence collection plans, and carry out intelligence preparation of the battlespace can provide Colombian counterparts with the skills necessary to take analyzed information, successfully convert it to intelligence and increase a host nation's military capabilities. Efforts by the Colombian government to develop imagery libraries, information databases, and better, more secure communication architectures with the assistance of experienced US personnel are examples of a host nation working within the boundaries of an established military relationship and foreign disclosure laws to recognize and improve technological and informational limitations. In Colombia, these improvements offer the hope of an even more capable and professional indigenous force.¹⁵⁵

Countries which are co-located with Colombia in the southern part of the Western Hemisphere present another challenge within the proposal of establishing productive military-to-military relationships. Costa Rica and Panama, for example, do not maintain military forces, and this reality must serve as a caution against limiting military-to-

¹⁵⁴ Villamizar, A. (2004). *La Reforma de la Inteligencia: Un imperativo democratico*, Colombia: Editorial Kimpres Ltda., pp.64.

¹⁵⁵ Interview of Colombia Military Branch and International Cooperation Division personnel conducted by the author, USSOUTHCOM Headquarters, Miami, Florida, 23 March 2005.

military relationships to military circles.¹⁵⁶ Despite a potential to occasionally be bureaucratic, military-to-military relationships prove to be an effective way to constructively engage host nation counterparts and their capabilities. Within USSOUTHCOM, a proactive plan to establish military-to-military relationships has been characterized by the development of a political and military relationship capable of interacting with military, civilian, and/or law enforcement units as responsible national security agencies. Although part of the United States' \$260 million dollars in aid to Colombia in 2003 supported the maintenance, training, and planning needs of Colombian military units, \$150 million dollars were also allocated to support anti-narcotic operations conducted by the Colombian National Police.¹⁵⁷ One-way military-to-military relationships in which strict US security protocols prevent information exchanges or where familiar western-style military hierarchies and forces are demanded will depict the United States as a self-serving hegemon. More importantly, it can disable or destroy prospective military relations capable of building mutually beneficial intelligence architectures.

G. CONCLUSION

Based on an ongoing Colombian conflict, similar geopolitical interests, and mutual cooperation, continued American logistical and financial assistance to Colombian military counterdrug and counterinsurgency operations appears to be assured. Ongoing threats from Colombian drug traffickers and insurgents highlight the value of the US/Colombia security relationship and shapes the extent and critical role played by information sharing. As the Global War on Terrorism widens, the importance of the security and stability of Colombia and other regional neighbors increases in the eyes of many American decision makers. Colombian and American security agencies currently work under the realization that in Colombia, drugs and terrorism have become one and

¹⁵⁶ Interview of International Cooperation Division Branch Head conducted by the author, USSOUTHCOM Headquarters, Miami, Florida, 24 March 2005.

¹⁵⁷ Statement of William B. Wood, US Ambassador to Colombia during the retirement of Colombian Flag Officers on October 14, 2004. Retrieved on March 22, 2005 from <http://usembassy.state.gov/colombia/wwws0076.shtml>

the same. The connection between drugs trafficking and terrorist activity, although considered tenuous by policy critics, cannot be ignored. The government of Colombia's ability to remain stable and democratic has become a critical component in America's strategy to secure its southern borders and preempt potential terrorist acts against US interests from weakened states within the Western Hemisphere.

Enough research has been conducted in support of this case study to determine that military-to-military relations between the United States and Colombia have been and continue to be a vehicle for improved intelligence and information sharing. This overview of the American military involvement in Colombia reveals aspects of both military-to-military relations and intelligence and information sharing agreements that can help avoid intelligence shortfalls in future conflicts and establish future intelligence infrastructures in countries where one previously did not exist. For example, when US personnel are bound by the highly classified nature of US intelligence assets as is the case in Colombia, military-to-military relations can be used to reciprocate a host nation's cooperation through other means. Attempts can be made to coordinate intelligence efforts or to exchange host nation information for an American commitment to improve host nation military information or intelligence gathering skills. Teaching host nation counterparts how to better analyze information and successfully convert information into intelligence can gradually increase levels of trust and the quantity and quality of information exchanges. US personnel can also be in a unique position to recognize, and if necessary, sensitize host nation counterparts to the counterproductive nature of risk-averse behavior and prevent this behavior from becoming an obstacle to better information and/or intelligence sharing opportunities. Finally, the existence of non-military, national security forces in places such as Costa Rica and Panama serves as a reminder that many countries do not deal exclusively with, or even maintain military forces. Therefore, military-to-military relationships should not be limited to military entities.

Despite the obvious difficulties and risks inherent to the sharing of sensitive information between two nations, the quest for progress and mission accomplishment in Colombia continues. Former SOUTHCOM Commander, General Charles Wilhelm,

attributed many of the successes in the Colombian war against drugs and insurgent forces to intelligence and operational duties such as intelligence preparation of the battlefield, improved air ground coordination, and more effective command and control.¹⁵⁸ Therefore, stakeholders in the Colombian democratic process can only hope that the cooperation between the US and Colombia continues to improve, and that the victories of Colombian forces on the field will increase opportunities for peace in the future.

¹⁵⁸ Statement of General Charles E. Wilhelm, USMC, Commander in Chief, US Southern Command before the Senate Caucus on International Narcotics Control, 21 September 1999.

V. AFGHANISTAN: AN INTELLIGENCE SHARING OPPORTUNITY IN PROGRESS

A. INTRODUCTION

For centuries, Afghanistan has been surrounded by politically unstable neighbors and deep tribal divisions. Its history is littered with numerous internal and external conflicts based on tribal rivalries, kinship, and a deep-seated opposition to outside intervention. The unsettled security situation throughout the country has increased the US military's need to gain a better understanding of native socio-political customs and improve its ability to coordinate with Afghan military counterparts. As described in the paragraphs below, US and Afghan attempts to cooperate militarily have resulted in both intelligence successes and failures. The presence of US and coalition forces throughout numerous Afghan provinces is a daily reminder that the Global War on Terrorism is still being fought in Afghanistan. Accordingly, American forces have been directed by military commanders to work closely with Afghan forces to eliminate the residual terrorist threat and support the Afghan central government's quest for a secure and stable environment.

Based on the assertion that military-to-military relations can be a conduit for the establishment of better intelligence architectures, the following case study first demonstrates how military-to-military relations with Afghan indigenous forces prior to the fall of the Taliban regime allowed US Special Operations Forces to carry out intelligence duties. Second, this research effort reveals that a failure to continue to nurture these military-to-military relations following the defeat of the Taliban delayed the training of indigenous forces, and resulted in a security situation that was not conducive to the successful accomplishment of many US and Afghan policy goals. Finally, following a discussion of US military training and cooperation efforts in Afghanistan, an assessment of several obstacles to improving American and Afghan relations is presented in order to scrutinize ways in which military-to-military relations must transform to suit strategic objectives and optimize intelligence support to deployed personnel. This review of US military involvement in Afghanistan affirms that a relationship between US

military and indigenous forces continues to be of critical importance. Moreover, formalizing these military-to-military relations can result in mutually beneficial information and intelligence sharing opportunities that can overcome shifts in policy and nation building obstacles.

B. US POLICIES IN AFGHANISTAN

Afghan public opinion regarding the involvement of the United States in Afghanistan is colored by previous American policy decisions, which as recently as the 1980's used Afghanistan as a geopolitical pawn to contain the Soviet Union and win the Cold War.¹⁵⁹ Following the withdrawal of Soviet forces from Afghanistan in 1989, Pakistani, Saudi, and eventually Taliban forces filled the leadership vacuum left by the abrupt termination of American logistical support to Afghan fighters. In a culture that values honor and trust, the sudden abandonment of Afghan warriors by American policy makers spawned suspicions and a sense of betrayal that to this day, complicate the military-to-military relations between the United States and Afghanistan. The relationship between the Taliban, Afghanistan's militant ruling faction, and Usama Bin Laden, leader of the Al Qaeda terrorist network, was established by the presidential administration of William J. Clinton prior to the terrorist attacks against the United States on September 11, 2001.¹⁶⁰ Nonetheless, neither the Clinton administration nor the subsequent presidential administration of George W. Bush considered Afghan opposition groups, collectively referred to as the Northern Alliance, to be capable enough to merit military assistance in their quest to remove the Taliban from power.¹⁶¹

Following the attacks of September 2001, the Bush Administration proceeded to support the defeat of the Taliban regime based on its refusal to extradite Usama Bin

¹⁵⁹ Thomas H. Johnson, interview with the author, Monterey, California, 15 June 2005. Professor Johnson is currently an Associate Research Professor in the Department of National Security Affairs at Naval Postgraduate School in Monterey, CA.

¹⁶⁰ Katzman, K. (2004). *Afghanistan: Post-War Governance, Security, and US Policy* (Congressional Research Service [CRS] Report for Congress Order Code RL30588). Washington D.C.: Library of Congress, 6.

¹⁶¹ Katzman, K. (2004). *Afghanistan: Post-War Governance, Security, and US Policy* (Congressional Research Service [CRS] Report for Congress Order Code RL30588). Washington D.C.: Library of Congress, 6.

Laden and the administration's goal to eliminate any and all state sponsors of terrorism.¹⁶² On October 7, 2001, a coalition of multinational and American forces launched Operation Enduring Freedom (OEF). The subsequent defeat of the Taliban regime weeks later was credited in part to an indigenous Afghan effort empowered by American military assistance and equipment. A political determination by the Bush administration to establish a stable Afghanistan has assured the involvement of American military personnel and resources in the region for many years to come. In the following sections, the interaction between US and Afghan military personnel is reviewed in order to establish the evolution of military-to-military relations before and after the fall of the Taliban regime. Similarly, these relationships are analyzed to determine the present and future status of military-to-military intelligence sharing between the United States and Afghanistan.

C. MILITARY-TO-MILITARY RELATIONS PRIOR TO THE FALL OF THE TALIBAN REGIME

The Taliban's forceful consolidation of power in 1996 and the subsequent establishment of a fundamentalist Islamic government resulted not only in the international isolation of the Afghan government, but also caused government opposition groups to join forces and take up arms against the ruling government. In September of 2001, the Taliban controlled approximately 75% of the country and most of the provincial capitals.¹⁶³ United States government agencies contacted the Northern Alliance with the help of US intelligence and Special Forces personnel, and subsequently provided Alliance members with the on-demand tactical aviation support, enhanced communications equipment, and improved command and control capabilities necessary to defeat the Taliban. The desire to oust the Taliban and hunt for Al Qaeda members, along with the financial and logistical resources bestowed by American forces on the

¹⁶² Katzman, K. (2004). *Afghanistan: Post-War Governance, Security, and US Policy* (Congressional Research Service [CRS] Report for Congress Order Code RL30588). Washington D.C.: Library of Congress, 8.

¹⁶³ Katzman, K. (2004). *Afghanistan: Post-War Governance, Security, and US Policy* (Congressional Research Service [CRS] Report for Congress Order Code RL30588). Washington D.C.: Library of Congress, 8.

ground, not only motivated a majority of the warlords within the Northern Alliance to briefly set aside their personal agendas but also provisionally mitigated objections to the creation of a national government.

Within this case study, Operation Enduring Freedom is characterized as an operation in which US Special Operations Forces (US SOF) guided accurate and persistent US air strikes on enemy forces in support of ground offensive operations by the Northern Alliance. American and British advisors characterized indigenous forces as large and capable enough to allow coalition personnel to reduce their international footprint within Afghanistan, minimize the perception of a coalition invading force, and empower Afghans to be the primary combat force.¹⁶⁴ Basic military-to-military relations with Afghan indigenous forces prior to the fall of the Taliban regime allowed US Special Operations Forces to carry out intelligence duties in support of propaganda, targeting, bomb damage assessment, special reconnaissance, civil affairs, and direct action missions.¹⁶⁵

During the months of November and December, 2001, members of the U.S. Army's 5th Special Forces Group under the command of US Army Captain Jason Amerine, fought along side Afghan leader and future president Hamid Karzai in what eventually became characterized by US and Afghan leaders as a decisive defeat of the Taliban.¹⁶⁶ Shortly after their arrival in the Oruzgan province, information regarding a convoy of multiple vehicles and approximately 300-500 Taliban fighters intent on re-taking the town of Tarin Kowt was communicated to US SOF and Northern Alliance fighters by senior Pashtun tribal leaders. Actionable and perishable in every sense of the word, this human intelligence allowed US SOF to inform senior command elements, prepare the battlespace, organize defensive forces, set up overwatch positions, and

¹⁶⁴ Cordesman, A.H. (2003). *The Lessons in Afghanistan: Warfighting, Intelligence, Force Transformation, Counterproliferation, and Arms Control*. Center for Strategic and International Studies, 8 (Executive Summary).

¹⁶⁵ Interview of US Army Special Forces Operational Detachment Commander conducted by the author, Naval Postgraduate School, Monterey, California, 09 May 2005.

¹⁶⁶ Interview US Army Captain Jason Amerine, Commander of Operational Detachment Alpha (ODA) 574, conducted *PBS Frontline* on July 9 and 12, 2002. Interview retrieved June 27, 2005 from <http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/pages/frontline/shows/campaign/interviews/amerine.html>

request coalition combat air support. During the Taliban advance towards Tarin Kowt, military relations between indigenous forces and US SOF personnel resulted in US access to a robust, indigenous intelligence network that encompassed the entire Pashtun tribal belt. These relations also allowed both US forces and the Northern Alliance to successfully direct military operations, and simultaneously coordinate the surrender of Taliban commanders via satellite telephones.

Beyond Tarin Kowt and across Afghanistan's rugged terrain, from the Shah-i-Kot Valley (site of Operation Anaconda) to eastern Afghanistan (the Tora-Bora region), to the isolated villages in the vicinity of Kandahar, US and Northern Alliance forces conducted additional combined operations in search of Al Qaeda and Taliban forces. In many instances and as previously demonstrated, air surveillance and attack support was based on information provided by Northern Alliance personnel and proved essential in determining enemy courses of action and prioritizing coalition objectives.¹⁶⁷ However, other instances reveal that the relationship between Northern Alliance and US personnel was not always perfect. Interviews with American personnel present during the initial phases of OEF reveal that in many cases the validity of indigenous information was also questionable. Moreover, the security of planned operations was compromised by Northern Alliance personnel with ties to the Al Qaeda and Taliban forces they were supposed to engage.¹⁶⁸ Consequently, evidence of a heavy reliance on Afghan forces of dubious loyalty resulted in sharp criticism from public media and government sources within the United States.

Overall, military-to-military relations between US and Northern Alliance forces sufficiently transcended cultural, language, and social differences to allow the elimination of Al Qaeda and Taliban forces.¹⁶⁹ When necessary, US military forces also paid cash for

¹⁶⁷ Sellers, P. (2004). *Incorporation of Indigenous Forces in Major Theater War: Advantages, Risks, and Considerations* (Center for Strategic Leadership, S04-05) Strategic Research Paper, US Army War College), 2.

¹⁶⁸ Interview of US Army Special Forces Operational Detachment Alpha Team Leader conducted by the author, Naval Postgraduate School, Monterey, California, 09 May 2005.

¹⁶⁹ Interview of US Army Special Forces Operational Detachment Commander conducted by the author, Naval Postgraduate School, Monterey, California, 09 May 2005.

manpower, advice, protection, compliance, assistance, and intelligence.¹⁷⁰ For the Northern Alliance, the Taliban represented a mortal enemy. For US and coalition forces, the Taliban was a shield for Al Qaeda terrorist cells. Rudimentary military relations between US and indigenous forces provided the means to an end. With the military and logistical support of the United States and the indigenous expertise from the Northern Alliance combat operations continued, and resulted in the fall of the Taliban regime by the end of November 2001. Operation Enduring Freedom denied Al Qaeda and Taliban forces the ability to hold terrain for extended periods of time, and forced them to abandon conventional operations against what they had hoped would be a debilitated Northern Alliance. On May 1, 2003, US Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld and the transitional Afghan President Hamid Karzai, declared an end to major combat operations.¹⁷¹

D. MILITARY-TO-MILITARY RELATIONS AFTER THE FALL OF THE TALIBAN REGIME

Training of the Afghanistan National Army (ANA) began shortly after the fall of the Taliban regime. The effort was driven by a mandate from the Bonn II Conference on Rebuilding Afghanistan and mandated a 70,000 strong armed force.¹⁷² According to published reports, the hastily arranged training of the ANA by US, British, and French instructors began in 2002 at the under-funded and hurriedly renovated Afghan Military Academy in Kabul.¹⁷³ Initially, the ANA was composed in large part of ineffectual recruits and weapons provided as a nominal gesture by the same warlords that had originally comprised the Northern Alliance. By comparison, ruling warlords maintained better-equipped and trained forces. Not surprisingly, ANA desertion rates during the first

¹⁷⁰ Interview of US Army Special Forces Operational Detachment Alpha Team Leader conducted by the author, Naval Postgraduate School, Monterey, California, 09 May 2005.

¹⁷¹ Katzman, K. (2004). *Afghanistan: Post-War Governance, Security, and US Policy* (Congressional Research Service [CRS] Report for Congress Order Code RL30588). Washington D.C.: Library of Congress, 9.

¹⁷² Feickert, A. (2005). *US Military Operations in the Global War on Terrorism: Afghanistan, Africa, the Philippines, and Colombia* (Congressional Research Service [CRS] Report for Congress Order Code RL32758). Washington D.C.: Library of Congress, 4.

¹⁷³ Peimani, H. (2003, July 26). Mission Impossible for the Afghan Army. *Asia Times On line*. Retrieved May 9, 2005 from <http://www.atimes.com>

phases of training ran as high as 50 percent due to poor motivation, low pay, corruption and hazing within the ranks.¹⁷⁴ It is maintained within this case study that the failure to nurture military-to-military relations established with tribal, religious leaders and warlords following the defeat of the Taliban delayed the recruitment, training, and preparedness of the ANA. This delay contributed to the power vacuum caused by the sudden defeat of the Taliban regime and resulted in a security situation that was not conducive to the training of indigenous military personnel capable of assuming US military duties. In time, and as a result of intense training and retraining by US and coalition forces, the Afghan population has slowly begun to regard the ANA as a more competent force and a symbol of President Karzai's efforts to bring about an Afghan central government.¹⁷⁵ The newly established ANA launched its first military operation, Operation Warrior Sweep, in July of 2003 in response to reports of Taliban and Al Qaeda activity in the Zormat Valley region.¹⁷⁶ Despite this and subsequent operations, public media reports and interviews with US SOF personnel confirm that the Afghan Army continues to be very dependent on US logistical support, and its members have had to sporadically contend with accusations of questionable and competing loyalties, low morale, and inconsistent performance.

During its short existence, the ANA has been trained by an extensive and eclectic group of foreign institutions and reserve cadres in what many critics have referred to as a "token effort." Based on the research conducted in support of this case study, it is believed that this type of fragmented training has hampered the development of a military culture within the Afghan Army. The effect of the inconsistent training of ANA elements on Afghanistan's stability and the prospects of intelligence sharing between Afghan and American military personnel will be discussed later on in this case study. In the spring of 2002, US Army Special Forces began training the first battalion of recruits for the

¹⁷⁴ Millen, R.A. (2005). Afghanistan: Reconstituting A Collapsed State. *Monograph*, 13 (ISBN 1-58487-192-X).

¹⁷⁵ Katzman, K. (2004). *Afghanistan: Post-War Governance, Security, and US Policy* (Congressional Research Service [CRS] Report for Congress Order Code RL30588). Washington D.C.: Library of Congress, 26.

¹⁷⁶ Peimani, H. (2003, July 26). Mission Impossible for the Afghan Army. *Asia Times On line*. Retrieved May 9, 2005 from <http://www.atimes.com>

Afghan National Army.¹⁷⁷ The establishment of a cohesive, multi-ethnic military force while trying to disarm a local militia estimated by open source reports to number in the thousands has become vital to the stability and security of Afghanistan. Since 2004, US SOF, in cooperation with French forces (responsible for training the ANA officer corps) and British military personnel (responsible for training the ANA non-commissioned officers) are training Afghanistan's first national army.¹⁷⁸ A national police force is also being trained by representatives from the United States and Germany.¹⁷⁹ Personnel and equipment shortages due in large part to a lack of support from Afghan warlords continue to plague the ANA's ability to develop and maintain its presence throughout Afghanistan. Moreover, religious and ethnic tensions have intensified the challenges of military life expected to bond ANA soldiers who as "civilians" were accustomed to fighting along tribal and regional lines. Traditionally, the military experience of ANA soldiers has been divided between Afghan officers who gained their military experience in the Soviet-styled Democratic Republic of Afghanistan Army, and the *jihadi*, who gained their experience in ad hoc units of various guerrilla factions.¹⁸⁰ Based on a complex history of tribal and autonomous tendencies, a dislike for the central government runs deep within the Afghan countryside, and the government's control beyond the capital has proven to be difficult and limited.

The ANA does not have a monopoly on legitimate use of force and Afghan warlords regard the ANA as a competition to their own loyal forces. Moreover, many of the US forces currently operating in Afghanistan have their own indigenous security force. These forces, funded as separate "anti-Al Qaeda" units, are often deceptive concerning their loyalty to regional warlords, are recruited independently of efforts to

¹⁷⁷ Cordesman, A.H. (2003). *The Ongoing Lessons of the Afghanistan Conflict*. Center for Strategic and International Studies, 139.

¹⁷⁸ Katzman, K. (2004). *Afghanistan: Post-War Governance, Security, and US Policy* (Congressional Research Service [CRS] Report for Congress Order Code RL30588). Washington D.C.: Library of Congress, 26.

¹⁷⁹ Katzman, K. (2004). *Afghanistan: Post-War Governance, Security, and US Policy* (Congressional Research Service [CRS] Report for Congress Order Code RL30588). Washington D.C.: Library of Congress, 27.

¹⁸⁰ Redding, R.W. (2005). 19th SF Group Utilizes MCA Missions to Train Afghan National Army Battalions, 17-3, 23.

form the ANA, and act as American proxies during counter-insurgency operations.¹⁸¹ This practice undermines the development of a unified ANA, complicates its search for legitimacy, and hampers efforts to develop a coordinated intelligence effort. Internally, the ANA cooperates very well within itself and based on several published reports, appears to have begun gradually accepting its role in coalition counterinsurgency operations.¹⁸² However, as previously mentioned, tribal and training challenges have caused military-to-military relations to develop slowly during a time when they are needed the most. Having reviewed the positive and negative nuances of previous relations between US and Afghan military personnel, the following section will analyze ongoing American advising and training efforts in Afghanistan to better establish the current and future status of military and intelligence relationships.

E. INVOLVEMENT OF US ADVISERS-TRAINERS IN AFGHANISTAN

While deployed to the Kabul Military Training Center during the fall of 2002, six US Army Special Forces Operational Detachments successfully trained six ANA battalions despite considerable logistical and cultural challenges.¹⁸³ Since then, the senior leadership of the ANA has “shadowed” US Special Forces performing humanitarian assistance missions so that Afghan leaders can witness examples of mission execution, and subsequently gain the capability to properly plan military civic action missions on their own.¹⁸⁴ Based on the literature reviewed in preparation of this case study, these training efforts appear to be having gradual success, leaving long-term successes to be determined by the security situation and the level of commitment from the ANA, the United States and Afghan government. In an effort to address long-term training deficiencies, US military personnel plan to organize additional follow on training courses

¹⁸¹ Anja, M., Singer, P.W. (2002). *A New Model Afghan Army*. Foreign Affairs. Retrieved May 9, 2005 from <http://www.foreignaffairs.org/20020701faessay8519/anja-manuel-p-w-singer/a-new-model-afghan-army>

¹⁸² Feickert, A. (2005). *US Military Operations in the Global War on Terrorism: Afghanistan, Africa, the Philippines, and Colombia* (Congressional Research Service [CRS] Report for Congress Order Code RL32758). Washington D.C.: Library of Congress, 4.

¹⁸³ Redding, R.W. (2005). 19th SF Group Utilizes MCA Missions to Train Afghan National Army Battalions, 17-3, 23.

¹⁸⁴ Redding, R.W. (2005). 19th SF Group Utilizes MCA Missions to Train Afghan National Army Battalions, 17-3, 27.

which will allow the new forces to develop necessary “real world” skills.¹⁸⁵ Unfortunately, as will be described in the paragraph below, well-meaning training objectives do not guarantee that the program will be designed to include or empower the necessary indigenous government organizations.

In December of 2002, the United States Department of Defense introduced the concept of Provincial Reconstruction Teams (PRTs) as a way to provide and enhance regional security and train personnel involved in Afghan reconstruction efforts.¹⁸⁶ PRTs supposedly endeavor to establish regional enclaves that foster the conditions necessary for reconstruction and are prohibited from combat or offensive operations. Following the operation of PRTs in northern Afghanistan, the UN-driven International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) assumed operational control of PRTs in the west last year (2004), while US military personnel maintained responsibility for the operation of PRTs in southern Afghanistan.¹⁸⁷ The proponents of this international effort hoped that a great part of Afghanistan’s tribal integration could occur with the help of US and Afghan military personnel working at the provincial level. However, ANA personnel have yet to participate in or carry out any PRT missions.¹⁸⁸ If PRTs are being developed to promote reconstruction efforts, allow military forces to establish personal relations with local Afghan leaders, and reduce insurgent influence in the region, why is the ANA not allowed to participate?

PRT efforts must be considered opportunities to cooperate militarily and share intelligence. More importantly, they should be executed as civic action missions in which the ANA can be empowered to serve the population directly, in order to establish the trust that is necessary to facilitate the exchange of information. Based on the political,

¹⁸⁵ Cordesman, A.H. (2003). *The Ongoing Lessons of the Afghanistan Conflict*. Center for Strategic and International Studies, 141.

¹⁸⁶ Katzman, K. (2004). *Afghanistan: Post-War Governance, Security, and US Policy* (Congressional Research Service [CRS] Report for Congress Order Code RL30588). Washington D.C.: Library of Congress, 25.

¹⁸⁷ Personal electronic communication with US personnel assigned to OMC-A Directorate of Police Sector Reform (Afghanistan) on June 6, 2005.

¹⁸⁸ Personal electronic communication with US personnel assigned to OMC-A Directorate of Police Sector Reform (Afghanistan) on June 6, 2005.

logistical, training and reconstruction challenges encountered by US and ANA forces within Afghanistan both before and after the fall of the Taliban, the situations and programs associated with coordinating and exchanging information and intelligence in Afghanistan must be reassessed and stabilized. In the following section, examples of US and Afghan intelligence efforts and capabilities will be discussed in an effort to identify how to sustain and improve current and future intelligence sharing relationships.

F. US INTELLIGENCE SHARING IN AFGHANISTAN

Based on US nation building efforts in Afghanistan, several examples of intelligence sharing between Afghan and US forces can be cited at the unclassified level. Intelligence sharing efforts in Afghanistan began to be publicly recognized by senior US military officers shortly after the start of Operation Enduring Freedom and revolved around the successful integration of groups of anti-Taliban fighters in Afghanistan with US Special Operations units specially trained in intelligence work.¹⁸⁹ With the help of Afghan indigenous forces, these teams were able to carry out intelligence duties in support of propaganda, targeting, bomb damage assessment, special reconnaissance, civil affairs, and direct action missions.¹⁹⁰ The establishment of these relations during initial US and coalition military operations in October of 2001 led to basic but successful intelligence sharing efforts between Afghan and US military counterparts. These arrangements were difficult for involved military personnel based on cultural, language, and technological differences, yet were also critical to the success of US and Afghan operations against the Taliban and Al Qaeda.

During OEF, the US military's ability to develop and communicate targeting intelligence at the strategic, operational, and tactical level was complemented by the presence of friendly indigenous forces that supported US SOF air strike requests, re-strike, bomb hit and even bomb damage assessments. Early cooperation with Northern Alliance units during OEF allowed US Special Operations units to conduct special

¹⁸⁹ Cordesman, A.H. (2003). *The Ongoing Lessons of the Afghanistan Conflict*. Center for Strategic and International Studies, 118.

¹⁹⁰ Interview of US Army Special Forces Operational Detachment Alpha Team Leader conducted by the author, Naval Postgraduate School, Monterey, California, 09 May 2005.

reconnaissance (SR) and target development missions that supplemented limited intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance and targeting systems. Moreover, these coordinated efforts helped to mitigate the religious and politically sensitive collateral damage concerns of coalition and US forces.¹⁹¹ In Afghanistan, the benefit of having human eyes on a target continues to be significant, based on the numerous types of terrain within the battlespace and the fact that many technical sensors are not suitable for fixing high value targets in time and/or space. At the operational and strategic level, interviews with US Army Special Forces Operational Detachment commanders describe the valuable help provided by Northern Alliance members in support of coalition target identification, target development, and once again, battle damage assessment. Therefore, the Afghan conflict demonstrates that the combination of a precision air-to-ground strike capability with a terrain-savvy ground forces element can result in a powerful targeting intelligence system.

Initially established in support of Operation Enduring Freedom and sporadically continuing to current nation-building operations, intelligence sharing practices between the United States and Afghanistan have been affected by vast cultural and language differences. A significant American unfamiliarity with Afghan social, religious, and political elements has also resulted in difficulties for US personnel when trying to conduct detailed intelligence collection and analysis of the Afghan insurgent threat. Moreover, cultural differences have also obscured the intelligence analyst's ability to identify enemy indications and warnings. In spite of, or perhaps because of these difficulties, US military and intelligence professionals have, in many cases, actively sought out opportunities to work with indigenous forces. Northern Alliance and ANA personnel possess the cultural knowledge necessary to develop the intelligence needed by US and coalition personnel to carry out critical civil affairs missions. For example, based on the interaction between ANA leadership personnel and US military counterparts during joint missions, members of US Special Forces and supporting elements have been able to complete personality assessments of ANA participants and local leaders at

¹⁹¹ Cordesman, A.H. (2003). *The Lessons in Afghanistan: Warfighting, Intelligence, Force Transformation, Counterproliferation, and Arms Control*. Center for Strategic and International Studies, 20 (Executive Summary).

multiple mission locations.¹⁹² This type of tribal human intelligence and situational awareness can prove to be instrumental in avoiding situations such as those seen in Iraq in the spring of 2004, when the US intelligence community encountered difficulties in assisting military officials with the vetting of potential leaders of the Falluja Brigade due to a lack of ground-level information and background on Iraqi military personnel.¹⁹³

Regardless of success, civil affairs missions between certain US military units and Afghan military forces have on occasion served as the unifying factor between necessary joint US and Afghan military operations and mutual intelligence cooperation. According to Major Robert Redding, a member of the 5th Battalion, 19th Special Forces Group, forming partnerships with members of NGO's operating within Afghanistan allowed US and Afghan military personnel to gather the necessary "ground truth" from agencies that had been working in the area for several years.¹⁹⁴ In Afghanistan, identifying indigenous social, religious, and political leaders that accurately represent the demographics of a specific area has proven to be critical and difficult unless it is done with the support of civilian entities that reside in the area. Although the importance of having architectures that can release intelligence products to non-governmental organizations (NGOs) has already been discussed, US operations in Afghanistan demonstrate conversely the importance of also being able to accept properly vetted information from these less conspicuous but equally important civilian entities.

Elements of US military intelligence are actively helping the newly formed Afghanistan National Security Directorate build its capabilities to monitor threats to the new government, including those posed by regional militias and local commanders.¹⁹⁵ For example, April of 2005 was marked by the graduation of the first group of Afghan

¹⁹² Redding, R.W. (2005). 19th SF Group Utilizes MCA Missions to Train Afghan National Army Battalions, 17-3, 27.

¹⁹³ Fleishman, J. (2004, April 27) Ex Baathists offer US advice, await call to arms. *Los Angeles Times*. Retrieved June 10, 2004, from <http://ebird.afis.osd.mil/e20040427279605>

¹⁹⁴ Redding, R.W. (2005). 19th SF Group Utilizes MCA Missions to Train Afghan National Army Battalions, 17-3, 24.

¹⁹⁵ Katzman, K. (2004). *Afghanistan: Post-War Governance, Security, and US Policy* (Congressional Research Service [CRS] Report for Congress Order Code RL30588). Washington D.C.: Library of Congress, 15.

Counterintelligence Directorate officers from the US Office of Military Cooperation-Afghanistan's (OMC-A) Basic Counterintelligence Course.¹⁹⁶ Described as six-month course on intelligence fundamentals, the curriculum consisted of training Afghans on security classification levels for information and documents, personnel security, and interview techniques.¹⁹⁷ US Army military intelligence professionals instructed and mentored ANA counter-intelligence officers on the basics of counterintelligence to include special operations, counter intelligence analysis, personnel security and foreign disclosure.¹⁹⁸ These skills will prove to be useful to both ANA and American counterparts who continue to be dependent on information from indigenous sources and must first must be interviewed, vetted, and tested. Moreover, military-to-military relations established between US and host nation personnel during training evolutions can eventually develop into relationships based on trust, and ultimately, develop into possibilities to exert mutual influence.

Within the targeting cycle, the most significant and least controllable variables in the targeting process are the intelligence-dependent processes of searching for the target and the decision of whether or not to strike it.¹⁹⁹ In places such as Afghanistan and Iraq, high value targets operate in decentralized groups and their ability to move and operate within multiple territories and populated areas can create dynamic targets of opportunity in a matter of minutes. In one instance during Operation Enduring Freedom, a tip concerning the location of a high value target was relayed to higher headquarters within hours, but then took several days to vet.²⁰⁰ Therefore, the consequences of being able to leverage intelligence requirements through even basic military relations such as those

¹⁹⁶Johnson, K.D. *Afghan Officers Complete Counterintelligence Course*, Office of Military Cooperation-Afghanistan Public Affairs. Retrieved May 11, 2005, from <http://www.defendamerica.mil/articles/apr2005/a042205la3.html>

¹⁹⁷ Johnson, K.D. *Afghan Officers Complete Counterintelligence Course*, Office of Military Cooperation-Afghanistan Public Affairs. Retrieved May 11, 2005, from <http://www.defendamerica.mil/articles/apr2005/a042205la3.html>

¹⁹⁸ Personal electronic communication with US Army Military Intelligence Officer assigned to the Office of Military Affairs-Afghanistan on May 22, 2005.

¹⁹⁹ The John Hopkins University (2003). AFCEA 2003 Fall Intelligence Symposium. [Memorandum] ILO-03-425.

²⁰⁰ Cordesman, A.H. (2003). *The Ongoing Lessons of the Afghanistan Conflict*. Center for Strategic and International Studies, 118.

initially seen in Afghanistan is very significant. The successful development of target intelligence to enhance targeting capabilities in Afghanistan must also be considered an example of how an intelligence architecture can use military-to-military relations to provide the intelligence support needed to facilitate the efficient and effective use of special operations forces.

Based on previous efforts by US Special Forces during OEF and current efforts of OMC-A personnel, the training of indigenous forces in Afghanistan has resulted in the development of an indigenous counterintelligence capability and the collection of intelligence regarding personality assessments, indigenous demographics, and kinetic as well as non-kinetic targeting. As a byproduct of established military-to-military relations between US military and Afghan personnel and the sharing of information at the tactical level, decision makers have been able to gain the situational awareness necessary to determine and develop mission tasks and objectives. In the past, these efforts have resulted in joint military maneuvers such as Operation Warrior Sweep, which can be regarded by both US and Afghan military personnel as evolutions of considerable military, training, and confidence-building value. The fact that US and coalition tactical successes during Operation Enduring Freedom were assisted by intelligence from indigenous sources must be instilled in US military personnel and in the training of new Afghan intelligence professionals. However, despite the intelligence sharing examples listed above, there are still obstacles that hamper the sharing of intelligence between US and Afghan forces and therefore endanger the security and stability of Afghanistan. As discussed in the following section, certain obstacles can complicate military-to-military relations with indigenous personnel and undoubtedly hinder the knowledge and perspective needed by both US and ANA forces to carry out future intelligence efforts.

G. OBSTACLES TO STABILITY AND THE SHARING OF INTELLIGENCE IN AFGHANISTAN

Warlordism, drug trafficking, ongoing insurgencies, and the coalition's disjointed training of the ANA have long hampered Afghanistan. Within this case study, these realities have been assessed to be obstacles to the sharing of intelligence between US and

Afghan military personnel. The manner in which American and Afghan military and intelligence entities organize and plan to support operations will fail if these obstacles are not eventually removed. The specific discussion of these four obstacles can provide a sample of the challenges that American and Afghan intelligence personnel are facing and will continue to face in a state building future. More importantly, this discussion identifies ways in which military-to-military relations can optimize intelligence support to deployed American and host nation personnel in the future.

1. Warlordism

Following the fall of the Taliban, senior US military planners did not fully understand the value of a longer-term military-to-military relationship with Northern Alliance personnel. Warlords, not Al Qaeda or the Taliban, are considered by US and Afghan representatives to be the main cause of instability in Afghanistan. In July of 2004, President Karzai cited warlords and their factional militias as the key threat to Afghan stability.²⁰¹ Ironically, many US personnel continue to rely on them for help hunting down terrorist and anti-government threats.²⁰² Many of the former leaders of the Northern Alliance now thwart government efforts to unite the country and buy legitimacy by trafficking in drugs, weapons, and regional influence. Regional leaders who remain provincially independent and function in an environment of misinformation and tribal rivalries, are often complicit in multiple criminal enterprises, maintain continued local authority over militias, and present a threat to Afghanistan's ability to function as a state. In many cases, local warlords negotiated surrenders that enabled high value Al Qaeda targets to escape, and complicated US and coalition targeting efforts.²⁰³

²⁰¹ Katzman, K. (2004). *Afghanistan: Post-War Governance, Security, and US Policy* (Congressional Research Service [CRS] Report for Congress Order Code RL30588). Washington D.C.: Library of Congress, 14.

²⁰² Millen, R.A. (2005). *Afghanistan: Reconstituting A Collapsed State. Monograph, 2* (ISBN 1-58487-192-X).

²⁰³ Cordesman, A.H. (2003). *The Lessons in Afghanistan: Warfighting, Intelligence, Force Transformation, Counterproliferation, and Arms Control*. Center for Strategic and International Studies, 8 (Executive Summary).

From a theoretical perspective, the fact that yesterday's Northern Alliance allies are today's warlords can be used as an example of how the nature of the conflict should be allowed to dictate the type of intelligence support required. As previously discussed, the arrival of US forces in Afghanistan during the fall of 2001, marked the beginning of basic military-to-military relations between US and indigenous Afghan forces. This period also marked the beginning of an intelligence sharing phase in which US forces and members of the Northern Alliance exchanged intelligence directly with mixed results. In many cases, intelligence products were pushed from the tactical to the strategic levels (bottom-up) because they were driven by indigenous human sources within an unconventional conflict and technical intelligence assets were unable to provide the necessary level of detail. The collapse of the Taliban regime marks what in this case study will be described as a separate intelligence sharing phase in which conventional US military forces became acquainted with former northern alliance fighters and demanded top-down, operational level intelligence products in support of conventional military operations. The election of President Karzai marked the beginning of another distinct intelligence sharing phase. In this phase, US and Afghan strategic goals to install a central government and carryout state-building operations have demanded both bottom-up and top-down intelligence products that can support the rebuilding of government infrastructures, facilitate tactical efforts to apprehend high value targets, and assist with the demobilization of provincial warlords. The return of many Northern Alliance fighters to their traditional roles as regional powerbrokers is not only an obvious example of the importance of maintaining indigenous relations, but also an example of the way in which strategic objectives and therefore intelligence relationships and requirements are driven by the nature of the conflict.

Afghan warlords are currently in a power struggle against the central government. Any strategy that directly confronts their power and influence could incite war. In a very simplistic way, the warlord's power can be described as a product of cultural tradition and the well-armed troops, employed and funded by their control of local trading and

smuggling routes.²⁰⁴ Although several of these warlords have made public gestures and statements in support of the Afghan central government, efforts by some spoilers to disarm and participate in the new governmental process have been scarce. Deciding between legitimate information and erroneous leads that result from local score settling has also been an ongoing problem for US operations in Afghanistan.²⁰⁵ The contention for potential recruits and resources, along with tribal desires for increased status and greater material wealth, has hampered effective and consistent combined military operations. Particularly in the context of warlordism, the Afghanistan case study demonstrates the importance of remaining engaged and aligned with host nation partners before, during, and long after the end of hostilities in order to properly develop and establish a military and intelligence relationship that can survive inevitable shifts in strategy. Once a record of combined military success is established, military-to-military relations between Afghan and US personnel can be the conduit for information and intelligence regarding future civilian leaders, military commanders, and enemies of the state, thereby empowering the host nation to choose its leaders wisely. Therefore, a military and subsequently an intelligence sharing relationship between the United States and Afghanistan is proposed as a way to empower a host nation with the tools necessary to discredit the crime and factionalism offered by warlords and promote the unity and protection offered by a national government.

2. Drugs

The cultivation, manufacture, and sale of drugs are a dominant feature of Afghan society. US officials believe that about \$2.3 billion -- half of Afghanistan's Gross Domestic Product (GDP) -- is generated by narcotics trafficking.²⁰⁶ The opium crop was estimated to be close to 4200 metric tons in 2004, resulting in a 17% increase from the

²⁰⁴ Anja, M., Singer, P.W. (2002). *A New Model Afghan Army*. Foreign Affairs. Retrieved May 9, 2005 from <http://www.foreignaffairs.org/20020701faessay8519/anja-manuel-p-w-singer/a-new-model-afghan-army>

²⁰⁵ Hartill, L. (2005). Sifting Intelligence Tips From Vendettas In Afghanistan. *Christian Science Monitor*. Retrieved May 9, 2005 from <http://www.csmonitor.com/2005/0126/p07s02-wosc.html>

²⁰⁶ Katzman, K. (2004). *Afghanistan: Post-War Governance, Security, and US Policy* (Congressional Research Service [CRS] Report for Congress Order Code RL30588). Washington D.C.: Library of Congress, 16

previous year and maintaining Afghanistan as the leading producer of opium worldwide.²⁰⁷ Heroin poppy growth in Afghanistan is rampant, taking place in 28 of the 32 provinces.²⁰⁸ Both the current presidential administration and many members of Congress have called for US military involvement in supporting or participating in eradication operations with Afghan forces. However, experts agree that a unilateral US counter drug policy in Afghanistan could undermine the current counterinsurgency campaign.²⁰⁹ According to published media reports, senior US military and civilian leaders believe that “enmeshing U.S. troops in drug fights... would alienate many Afghans -- some of whom have become useful intelligence sources -- and also divert attention from core US military missions of combating insurgents and aiding reconstruction.”²¹⁰ This type of attitude is reflective of the fact that many US decision makers do not realize that drug, insurgency, and reconstruction issues in Afghanistan are intertwined, and that a stable Afghanistan cannot be attained without the empowerment of a central government and a representative military. Profits from illicit drug trafficking are predominantly funding and extending anti-government and anti-American efforts in Afghanistan. As a result, British and American forces in Afghanistan are assisting in the training and logistical support of Afghan drug interdiction forces in the hopes that gradual eradication will prove to be more effective over time.²¹¹

Intelligence sharing arrangements in which US military personnel proactively train and assist ANA forces to develop the analytical and intelligence skills necessary to carryout anti-drug public awareness campaigns could result in the advancement of a long but necessary eradication process within a more permissive environment. An intelligence sharing relationship that goes beyond the apprehension of farmers and the destruction of

²⁰⁷Tohid, O. (2003, July) Bumper Year for Afghan Poppies. *Science Christian Monitor*, pp.24.

²⁰⁸ Millen, R.A. (2005). Afghanistan: Reconstituting A Collapsed State. *Monograph*, vii (ISBN 1-58487-192-X).

²⁰⁹ Feickert, A. (2005). *US Military Operations in the Global War on Terrorism: Afghanistan, Africa, the Philippines, and Colombia* (Congressional Research Service [CRS] Report for Congress Order Code RL32758). Washington D.C.: Library of Congress, 4.

²¹⁰ Millen, R.A. (2005). Afghanistan: Reconstituting A Collapsed State. *Monograph*, 9 (ISBN 1-58487-192-X).

²¹¹ Millen, R.A. (2005). Afghanistan: Reconstituting A Collapsed State. *Monograph*, 8 (ISBN 1-58487-192-X).

poppy fields and identifies the critical nodes and high value targets of the Afghan drug network is necessary to achieve strategic success in Afghanistan. A slow and difficult mentoring process to be sure, but eventually, a great security leap forward for both the United States and Afghanistan if this very complex process is treated with the care it deserves.

3. The Ongoing Insurgency

US military personnel and their various Afghan counterparts continue to operate in Afghanistan in a search for remaining Al Qaeda and Taliban operatives. These military operations have revealed the US military's limited cultural awareness and its difficulty in containing a decentralized insurgent movement. These shortfalls can be expected to encourage many US adversaries to develop or improve similar asymmetric capabilities today and in the future. Based on enemy observations of coalition troops in Afghanistan, it is likely that remaining terrorist and criminal elements will adapt to US intelligence gathering methods by constructing smaller, more concealed terrorist training camps that cannot be located by American intelligence satellites.²¹²

A continuous exchange of information such as the one established in the fall of 2001 and the one fostered through basic US military and intelligence training programs can provide a long-term security plan that can insure that Afghanistan never again becomes a sanctuary for terrorism. According to General Norton A. Schwartz, Joint Staff Director of Operations, "Our main struggle is for information dominance, and our needs are often best met by tapping into information that can only be provided by the local populace... [The United States] must improve our ability to understand and effectively interact with our environment."²¹³ Once participants and sources are vetted, intelligence support provided through military-to-military relations can be discrete, involve a small

²¹² Cordesman, A.H. (2003). *The Lessons in Afghanistan: Warfighting, Intelligence, Force Transformation, Counterproliferation, and Arms Control*. Center for Strategic and International Studies, 13 (Executive Summary).

²¹³ Prepared remarks of the Joint Staff Director of Operations, Lieutenant General Norton A. Schwartz, for the 15th Annual National Defense Industrial Association Special Operations and Low Intensity Conflict (SO/LIC) Symposium, Washington, D.C., 6 FEB 2004.

number of personnel, and could be sustained for the period of time necessary to defeat the remaining terrorist networks. It is hereby proposed that a well-established military-to-military relationship can provide unconventional intelligence regarding an adversary's personality, education, and motivation, which in today's Global War on Terrorism, can be more important than the need to know his current order of battle.

4. Fragmented Training

The ANA has been trained under a fragmented, confusing and potentially counterproductive training process. Initial international efforts to build a new Afghan army were led by ISAF in Kabul.²¹⁴ Nonetheless, in April 2002, the US Department of Defense directed the deployment of 150 US Army Special Forces troops to begin training a professional Afghan military force.²¹⁵ In June of 2003, the 124th Regional Training Institute who are National Guard soldiers from Vermont arrived in Afghanistan to join ANA training efforts led by personnel from the 10th Mountain Division units.²¹⁶ By November of 2003, following the departure of the 124th National Guard and other assigned forces, the 45th Brigade of the Oklahoma National Guard assumed the responsibility of training multiple elements of the ANA. In July of 2004, the 45th Brigade was eventually relieved by the Indiana National Guard's 76th Brigade, as part of an effort to anchor a multi-state task force formed to train the ANA.²¹⁷ Upon arrival, the 76th Brigade was directed to coordinate ANA training efforts with militaries from the United Kingdom, France, Romania, Mongolia, Bulgaria, and Germany.²¹⁸ According to their Public Affairs Officer "there's no specific Army unit that exists to do this job... the new

²¹⁴ Anja, M., Singer, P.W. (2002). *A New Model Afghan Army*. Foreign Affairs. Retrieved May 9, 2005 from <http://www.foreignaffairs.org/20020701faessay8519/anja-manuel-p-w-singer/a-new-model-afghan-army>

²¹⁵ Tyson, A.S. (2002). Pentagon Challenge: Build an Afghan Army. *Christian Science Monitor*. Retrieved May 9, 2005 from <http://www.globalpolicy.org/security/peacekpg/training/0411afg.htm>

²¹⁶ Williams, T.M. (2004). Vermont National Guard Trains Afghan Army Trainers. *American Forces Information Services News Articles*. Retrieved May 9, 2005 from <http://www.defendamerica.mil/articles/jan2004/a010704b.html>

²¹⁷ Hefling, K. (2004). Troops to take over training of Afghan National Army. *The Free Lance Star*. Retrieved May 9, 2005 from www.fredericksburg.com and <http://tfphoenix.omb.state.ok.us/news.htm>

²¹⁸ Hefling, K. (2004). Troops to take over training of Afghan National Army. *The Free Lance Star*. Retrieved May 9, 2005 from www.fredericksburg.com and <http://tfphoenix.omb.state.ok.us/news.htm>

concept here is (*sic*) building an Army, which is not something that is normal for us to do.”²¹⁹ In December of 2004, the US Department of Defense announced that the Florida National Guard’s 53rd Infantry brigade would be deployed and involved in the training of the ANA.²²⁰ The rotation of these and other US National Guard units has been coordinated and directed by Coalition Joint Task Force (CJTF) Phoenix. This CJTF is comprised of National Guard units from more than 20 states and the contingents from seven countries, and has been tasked to execute the broad-based training, mentoring, and assistance programs needed to enable the ANA to field a mission ready central corps.²²¹

Information regarding CJTF Phoenix, while limited, depicts the organization as very capable of providing the training, command and control necessary to conquer the challenges inherent to what in Afghanistan has become a multinational Foreign Internal Defense effort. Therefore, the citation of CJTF Phoenix’s role in rotating reserve units through the ANA training program is not intended to criticize. Military training that is fractured by the constant turnover of instructors and units can be considered necessary due to operational commitments, scheduled rotations, and manpower shortages. However, regardless of the reason, a quantity over quality approach to the training of the ANA that does not allow for mission continuity decreases and may even eliminate any opportunities for the establishment of military-to-military relations with ANA counterparts.

A “revolving door” training policy which constantly introduces and removes trainers to satisfy rotation schedules or includes a wide variety of multinational military influences can hamper US efforts to identify and begin to establish operational and intelligence relations with personnel at the grassroots level. Military culture takes years to build and efforts that continuously rotate the nationality, level of experience, and number of trainers can collectively distract the ANA from its introspective development of a

²¹⁹ Hefling, K. (2004). Troops to take over training of Afghan National Army. *The Free Lance Star*. Retrieved May 9, 2005 from www.fredericksburg.com and <http://tfphoenix.ond.state.ok.us/news.htm>

²²⁰ US Department of Defense News Release No. 1289-04. *DOD Announces OEF/OIF Rotational Coverage*. December 14, 2004.

²²¹ GlobalSecurity.Org (2005) Coalition Joint Task Force Phoenix. Retrieved June 13, 2005 from <http://www.globalsecurity.org/military/agency/dod/cjtf-phoenix.htm>

military identity. Military-to-military relations based on the trust that is essential to share intelligence and subsequently exert influence cannot be developed via this type of rotation. Organizational stability and time are needed by US and indigenous forces to develop the appropriate vetting techniques necessary to maintain operational security, corroborate information, and evaluate intelligence collection abilities and needs. It is incumbent upon the United States Armed Forces to identify unique ways in which indigenous forces can be approached and invited into a stable military-to-military relationship that in time, will maximize the effectiveness of US forces and their allies on the battlefield. In order for an intelligence sharing relationship to be successful, continuity during the training of host nation counterparts is key.

H. CONCLUSION

Currently, the establishment of a capable, cohesive, ethnically balanced national army in Afghanistan is essential to isolate the population from the insurgency and increase the legitimacy of the government. The Afghan government must train a national army, battle an ongoing insurgency, decrease drug trafficking, and persuade Afghan warlords to give up the power derived from maintaining a militia and accept the power awarded for being part of a democratic government. This is a monumental task and one that by no means can be achieved by only establishing a military-to-military relationship and sharing intelligence. However, Afghanistan is an intelligence sharing opportunity in progress. The fluid political and military situations before and after the fall of the Taliban regime must be a reminder that in Afghanistan, even primitive military-to-military relations have served as a mutual conduit for cultural appreciation, increased situational awareness, and increased intelligence capabilities. In many cases, the failure to nurture military-to-military relations established with Afghan tribal, religious leaders and warlords following the defeat of the Taliban have delayed the recruitment, training, and preparedness of the ANA. However, according to US military personnel assigned to law enforcement or military training duties in Afghanistan, there are still “ample opportunities” to establish formal and informal military and intelligence sharing relations

with host nation counterparts, making the ability to capitalize on these opportunities a critical skill.²²²

The probability of once again deploying US forces to a country that willingly or unwillingly becomes unable to contain and defeat a terrorist threat is not remote. However, it is important to remember that although the conflict in Afghanistan may share similarities with other failed states, each scenario is different. This case study reveals that a failure to maintain military-to-military relations before, during and after a conflict can deprive US and host nation personnel with the stability and continuity needed by military professionals to furnish decision makers with the intelligence and analysis needed to support changing policy objectives. Conversely, the establishment of committed and long-term military-to-military relations can be instrumental in building the confidence and infrastructure necessary to foster the successful sharing of intelligence. In Afghanistan, state building continues to be a challenge to the Afghan and American governments and the role of intelligence as a decision-making tool is critical. Although multi-ethnic collaboration and cooperation in the current security environment may often be difficult, it can also represent the beginning of an opportunity to enhance American and Afghan intelligence sharing capabilities.

²²² Personal electronic communication with US personnel assigned to OMC-A Directorate of Police Sector Reform (Afghanistan) on June 6, 2005.

VI. ARGUMENTS, COUNTERARGUMENTS, AND IRAQ

Any soldier or Marine in the field will tell you that he gets virtually all of his useful intelligence by walking the beat and talking to citizens in order to build trust (and occasionally making a back-alley payoff to find and kill terrorists). I asked one brigade commander what sort of intelligence he received from high-level "networked" products and he replied succinctly: 'week-old PowerPoint slides.'²²³

A. INTRODUCTION

In recent years, the emphasis placed by the United States government on national security and stability both at home and abroad has risen exponentially due to the significant threat to the United States from illegal immigration, ongoing international criminal enterprises, and transnational terrorism. In an effort to establish the value of military relationships as a way to improve intelligence architectures in areas of present and future American interest, this thesis has analyzed aspects of US political and military involvement in Iraq (the initial backdrop for the introduction of this thesis premise), El Salvador, Colombia, and Afghanistan. This thesis has also presented unclassified examples of the successful and unsuccessful implementation of intelligence sharing measures between each country and the United States during the course of established joint military training and combat operations. Lessons learned from the review of these cases can help US and host nation military personnel develop intelligence and information sharing programs correctly, in conjunction with military training relationships, and in support of current and future US stability and security policies.

Based on research conducted in support of this thesis project, it is asserted that well-established military relationships and subsequent intelligence and information sharing agreements can support long-term US security policies in countries of current and future interest. In the following text, the purpose, scope, and methodology of this thesis are reviewed as a preamble to a final analysis of the hypothesis and research questions originally presented in the introductory chapter. Thesis arguments are detailed as part of a

²²³ Scales, R. (February 3, 2005). Human Intel vs. Technology. *Washington Times*, 21.

discussion of the reasons in favor and against the use of military-to-military relations to improve intelligence capabilities. Both this chapter and thesis conclude with a re-assessment of US involvement in Iraq. It is proposed within this chapter that one of the reasons why military intelligence sharing between US and indigenous military personnel has not effectively developed and matured in Iraq is the ongoing but incomplete effort by US and coalition forces to successfully train a professional and self-sufficient Iraqi security force. Another reason why military intelligence sharing between US and Iraqi military personnel has not thrived in Iraq is the absence of strong military-to-military relations between US and Iraqi forces. Although military relationships have been a foundation for the establishment of new or enhanced intelligence and information sharing agreements and security efforts in countries such as El Salvador, Colombia, and Afghanistan, an application of many of these lessons to Iraq must wait until Iraqi security forces have established a more stable environment with the help of properly trained and equipped personnel. It is assessed that once Iraqi forces become a capable military institution, the guidelines presented following this chapter can improve American intelligence sharing capabilities by way of committed military-to-military relations; in effect, help the United States and the host nation successfully and locally train an army of intelligence analysts.

B. THESIS PURPOSE AND SCOPE

The overarching purpose of this thesis is to further US national interests abroad and improve American training of foreign militaries for current and future conflicts. Within this thesis, it is proposed that US national interests can be strengthened by emphasizing the value of military relationships as a way to improve intelligence architectures long-term. Thesis findings are presented as a set of guidelines on how to successfully develop and enhance information and intelligence sharing programs, and are made available to help decision makers improve intelligence capabilities through the use of international military-to-military relations. The sharing of information and/or intelligence, even in its most basic forms, can provide US military and host nation counterparts with the knowledge necessary to achieve policy objectives, identify

indications and warnings, and provide war fighters with the proactive intelligence support needed to plan and execute appropriate military options. An emphasis on the importance of training current and future allies while fostering long term intelligence efforts will increase the scope of US policies by empowering allied partners and successfully accomplishing mutual national objectives. This thesis and accompanying guidelines are submitted for use as a concept for current and future operations and should be considered useful in establishing intelligence architectures that can successfully support operations at the tactical, operational, and strategic level based on military-to-military relationships that have been nurtured over time.

C. THESIS METHODOLOGY

This research project has been conducted to prove or disprove a hypothesis which affirms that the United States military can mitigate intelligence shortfalls by learning from previous US military involvements in El Salvador, Colombia and subsequently, Afghanistan and Iraq. The number of countries selected for review was limited to four based on pre-determined time constraints. The selection of these specific countries is motivated by the thesis author's desire to document and investigate US military and intelligence sharing efforts in the Latin American and Middle Eastern regions. Within the case studies of the specified four countries, background concerning the conflict which incited US military involvement has been provided, along with discussions on applicable US policies, pre-existing military-to-military relations and conditions, the role of US advisers/trainers, existing information or intelligence sharing programs, conflict status and/or resolutions and specific research findings. The external validity of each case study has been demonstrated through a documentary review and the use of organizational references and subject matter experts. The analysis of specific characteristics within this sample of international conflicts has been carried out in order to better determine how the US military can establish an intelligence architecture in future areas of interest or conflict using different levels of military-to-military relations.

Many of the boundaries and circumstances in which military relationships can be developed to achieve mutual intelligence goals are identified and discussed in a set of

guidelines that can assist host nations to successfully train intelligence professionals. These guidelines are a compilation of research results derived from the specified case studies and offer US military forces a way to proactively engage host nation military personnel as key terrain. To add clarity to the arguments presented, terms such as “host nation,” “indigenous,” “architecture,” and “model” have been defined and referenced where and when appropriate. Rather than discussing the *effectiveness* of multinational training, this thesis discusses the *value* of military-to-military exchanges because, as first discussed in the case study of US involvement in El Salvador, the value of intelligence must not be measured in the context of American political and military interests alone.

D. THE ARGUMENTS

In addition to the previously stated hypothesis, three associated questions were developed and researched as part of this thesis project. Both the hypothesis and all the research questions have been individually addressed in the paragraphs below.

Hypothesis: The United States military can mitigate intelligence shortfalls by training foreign armies using an El Salvador/Colombia training and intelligence-sharing model.

For purposes of this thesis, a model is defined as an example, pattern, exemplar, or ideal set before one for guidance or imitation.²²⁴ An “El Salvador/Colombia training and intelligence-sharing model” can therefore be defined as the pattern of American military and political policies used by the United States government during its involvement in El Salvador and Colombia, respectively. Within this thesis, the complete imitation of the policy patterns used in El Salvador, Colombia, or any other country must be discouraged because each conflict is unique and set in a specific socio-political and military context. These factors notwithstanding, it is affirmed that the United States can mitigate intelligence shortfalls in areas of future conflict not by imitating, but by *learning* from these two training and intelligence-sharing models.

²²⁴ Merriam Webster. (1983) *Webster's Ninth New Collegiate Dictionary*. Massachusetts: Merriam-Webster.

Case studies of El Salvador, Colombia, and even Afghanistan and Iraq reveal that, although the underlying causes of conflict and subsequent reactions by the United States and host nations differ greatly within the context of time and place, commonalities within each case can be identified and referred to for guidance. In these case studies for example, the use of highly sophisticated intelligence assets and logistical support as a policy tool has been commonplace during political and military efforts by the United States to professionalize military personnel in less sophisticated countries. Although, within this thesis many of these policies are categorized as poor models for the use of military relations and the improvement of intelligence capabilities, commonalities have been analyzed to glean valuable lessons. These lessons are presented as recommendations to help the United States military train foreign armies in a way that can mitigate intelligence shortfalls in the future. The establishment of military-to-military relations between US and host nation personnel can open the lines of communication by revealing mutual goals such as the defeat of an insurgency, the reduction of criminal enterprise, and the establishment of a central government. The guidelines provided at the end of this thesis are intended to serve as a tool that can be useful to US military decision makers, by providing guidance on how to learn from previously successful and unsuccessful political and military decisions, and how to leverage military relations as a way to minimize current and future intelligence shortfalls.

Is the nature of a training relationship fertile ground for the conception of an intelligence architecture? How can training be used as a vehicle?

When available, military relations such as those established in El Salvador and Colombia can be fertile ground for the establishment of an intelligence architecture by first facilitating the exchange of logistical assistance, technical expertise, knowledge, background, trust and the confidence necessary for mutual intelligence or information sharing agreements. Second, military relations can also be used to assess host nation intelligence capabilities prior to, during, and after the initiation of an intelligence sharing agreement. As discussed within the case study of Afghanistan, military relations between

US and host nation personnel transcend intricate and distinct military and political phases and can become the basis for the distinct intelligence requirements and capabilities necessary to defeat a mutual enemy.

Military training programs and relationships can facilitate information and intelligence relationships in diverse ways. For example, the American willingness to treat military counterparts with decency and respect proved to be critical in countries such as El Salvador. During the Salvadoran civil war, the existence of personal rapport between US and Salvadoran service members was noted by select personnel to be instrumental in the development of the trust necessary to have a mutual intelligence relationship.²²⁵ Within different levels of classifications and to varying extents, relationships between US military personnel and indigenous personnel in Afghanistan, Iraq, El Salvador, and Colombia have frequently provided an intelligence fidelity that is often beyond the reach of sophisticated US intelligence assets. As described in the case study of US involvement in El Salvador, military-to-military relations have provided a forum in which the utility of US intelligence support can be determined and evaluated. The case study of US involvement in Colombia demonstrates how training initiatives via military-to-military relations can be instrumental in the reciprocation of host nation cooperation when foreign disclosure programs and operational security prevent the direct exchange of information and/or intelligence. Deliberate, proactive, military-to-military exchanges such as those described by US trainers in Colombia has provided insight into the Colombian doctrinal development process, sensitized Colombian counterparts to the counterproductive nature of risk-averse behavior, and emphasized the benefits of maintaining the lines of information exchange open.

Military-to-military relations in countries such as Afghanistan have revealed the existence of military personnel who possess personal agendas that are contrary to US and

²²⁵ US Navy Intelligence Liaison Officer, interview conducted by the author, Monterey, California, 26 January 2005. Currently a senior officer in the US Naval Intelligence community, he served as chief of a technical analysis team upon reporting to El Salvador in 1987. Jose Eduardo Angel, Gen., Retired, interview with the author, San Salvador, El Salvador, 29 December 2004. Gen. Angel served as Commander of the Atlacatl Battalion until 1992 and was the Vice-Minister of Defense until his retirement from the Salvadoran Army in 2000.

host nation policy goals and hamper both internal and transnational political efforts.²²⁶ Similarly, in Iraq, despite numerous advancements in the military training of Iraqi defense forces, training policies and programs that appear more concerned with the quantity of recruits graduated rather than the quality of the training provided must raise concern within the discerning reader. Factors such as conflicting agendas and policies that favor short-term training versus long-term qualitative goals are critical to military-to-military relations because intelligence sharing programs such as those developed in El Salvador and Colombia have depended, according to research conducted during the case studies, on the professionalism and trust developed following comprehensive US military training.²²⁷ Not surprisingly, inadequate military-to-military training relations can also hamper attempts to improve intelligence infrastructures if the relations do not strive for continuity or if they are excessively disrupted by temporarily assigned personnel. Therefore, based on the contention that a military-to-military training relationship is fertile ground for the conception of an intelligence architecture, US military personnel and their host nation counterparts must be challenged to confront political and logistical realities and accept them as one of many factors that will gradually shape the depth and breadth of established military relations. Political and military agendas will always exist. Nonetheless, the trust enabled by sincere military-to-military relations can help understand, recognize, and work through US and host nation agendas to secure vital common ground.

Can a systematic approach be deduced from the training and intelligence models described in the case studies that could help current US operations in Iraq and Afghanistan? Other countries?

The decision to study seemingly disparate conflicts in El Salvador, Colombia, Afghanistan, and Iraq is justified given that these countries have been united for one brief moment in time by a need to empower indigenous security forces amidst crisis, a bilateral

²²⁶ Interview of US Army Special Forces Operational Detachment Alpha Team Leader conducted by the author, Naval Postgraduate School, Monterey, California, 09 May 2005.

²²⁷ US Navy Intelligence Liaison Officer, interview conducted by the author, Monterey, California, 26 January 2005. Jose Eduardo Angel, Gen., Retired, interview with the author, San Salvador, El Salvador, 29 December 2004.

requirement to establish or improve intelligence capabilities, and the desire to protect US and host nation strategic interests. Nonetheless, the deduction of a “cookie-cutter” template that can be placed over training and intelligence efforts in Iraq and Afghanistan is not feasible because these conflicts exist as independent entities fueled by unique social, political, and military precursors. The equipment shortages, lack of leadership, poor military skills, absence of appropriate training facilities, and limited intelligence skills discussed in the El Salvador and Colombia case studies can be considered reminiscent of those currently experienced by American forces in Afghanistan and Iraq since the fall of the Taliban government and the Saddam Hussein regime. However, drawing conclusions, systematic or otherwise, based on four completely different conflicts is unwise and therefore not recommended.

Conversely, an analysis of the political, military, training, information and intelligence sharing characteristics in each one of these country scenarios has revealed important commonalities and resulted in the extrapolation of very useful and inclusive guidelines on how to generally use joint military training as a vehicle to build better intelligence capabilities and mitigate intelligence shortfalls. For example, guidelines that advise against the use of intelligence as political currency and warn against the mass production of generic intelligence products complement guidelines that encourage the advancement of indigenous training continuity, the periodic evaluation of US intelligence support, and the use of intelligence training to reciprocate host nation cooperation. Based on an analysis of the identified case studies, these guidelines identify factors that have positively and negatively affected military-to-military relations and mutual intelligence capabilities in the past and present, and could mitigate intelligence shortfalls in countries such as Afghanistan and Iraq in the future.

Can the US better prepare for future conflicts with a long-term commitment that emphasizes intelligence as a by-product of training rather than with current short-term nation building efforts?

This thesis has analyzed both successful and unsuccessful American attempts to develop military-to-military relationships as a way to secure mutual intelligence gains at the strategic, operational, and tactical level. Long term military and logistical

commitments by US military personnel in countries such as Colombia and El Salvador have been difficult and expensive. However, over time, commitments to stability and security in Latin America have proven to be more beneficial to US and host nation policy goals than short-term, short-sighted training and equipping operations, which in countries such as Iraq placed the emphasis on a quota of uniformed military personnel and subsequently resulted in large scale desertions.²²⁸ Research in support of this thesis reveals that countries such as El Salvador and Colombia, which possessed limited military and economic means, were predominantly unprepared to combat unconventional threats. In these countries, the precursors for socio-political instability were ignored, and insurgency movements thrived based on the long period of time required for the training and preparation of personnel qualified to effectively combat anti-government efforts. However, military-to-military relations eventually became a conduit for US efforts to improve situational awareness, attempt to empower indigenous forces, address civil and military strategies, and even contend with unpredictable US funding practices.

The intent of this thesis is not to compare one conflict against another. In Iraq, US military personnel did not initially have the opportunity to take advantage of military-to-military relations with Iraqi counterparts. In any of the countries and conflicts analyzed within this thesis, relationships between American military personnel, indigenous forces, and the civilian population have, at one time or another, been tenuous at best. Moreover, based on many political, military, cultural, and situational factors, American difficulties in understanding the human terrain persist. In these types of situations, essential elements of information can remain unspecified and intelligence requirements can go unanswered. Case studies of US involvement in both El Salvador and Colombia -- which in each case lasted over a decade -- and of the relatively recent involvement of US forces in Iraq and Afghanistan support policies that advocate the deployment of military intelligence assets long before the commencement of hostilities. The proactive development by intelligence professionals of the cultural, social, political, and military baselines which proved to be

²²⁸ Filkins, D. (2004). Biggest Task For US General is Training Iraqis to Fight Iraqis. *New York Times*, 1. Colonel J. Durrant, USMC (Ret.), Interview with the author, Monterrey, California, 24 January, 2005. Colonel Durrant was assigned as Director, Tactical Training and Exercise Control Group in July 2003; and directed 1st Marine Division Iraqi Security Forces training activities throughout the Anbar Province, Iraq from May to December 2004.

useful in countries like El Salvador, and remain elusive in Iraq, can not only identify the precursors of an insurgency, but also assist in establishing long-term commitments that emphasize intelligence as a by-product of training.

Today, the United States can begin to implement long-term security commitments through indigenous and military relationships that will last throughout the duration of the conflict (unlike Afghanistan), and can challenge US counterparts to produce intelligence that is of value (as in El Salvador) and support mutual national objectives (as in Colombia). A decreased American military presence and the conception of a democracy-based government in places like Iraq can be further insured through the security provided by a capable indigenous defense force and an effective intelligence architecture.

E. THE COUNTERARGUMENTS

The enhancement of intelligence capabilities through the establishment and use of military-to-military relations could be considered ineffective and even inappropriate for several reasons. First, military-to-military relations could be considered vulnerable to fluctuating and competing US and host nation government policies. Second, military-to-military relations could be seen by critics as subject to powerful external forces like individual self-interest, strong native allegiances, and mistrust of American involvement. Third, every conflict and set of military and intelligence requirements associated with the conflict is different, based on unique underlying political, social, and religious circumstances. Finally, independent from the environment, the development of military-to-military relations is considered by many critics to just take too much time. Nonetheless, as previously stated, military-to-military relationships have long been established by US military personnel with different levels of success over varying lengths of time. The following paragraphs will discuss the four counterarguments listed above in greater detail.

Military-to-military relations have indeed proven to be vulnerable to variable and sometimes unpredictable government policies. During the civil war in El Salvador, American policies to modernize Salvadoran institutions often clashed with diplomatic efforts to reform the country's social infrastructure, and antagonized local political

factions eager to gain or maintain political control. Similarly, American government policies often tied the continuation of US logistical and financial aid to the Salvadoran Army's observance and preservation of human rights. Periods of unpredictable or insufficient US funding often resulted in ammunition shortages and training stoppages that caused established Salvadoran battalions to be overworked or, in many cases, not work at all.²²⁹ Nonetheless, despite continuous and sometimes tense diplomatic relations, the government of El Salvador slowly recognized and adjusted to its role as a servant of the Salvadoran population. Conversely, in Afghanistan, the multiple transformations of the insurgent threat and the emergence of a central government have forced susceptible US policies and intelligence products to transform and keep up with the dynamic security situation.²³⁰ Finally, in Colombia, unrestricted flow of information between US and Colombian forces is often hampered by strict US government disclosure laws limiting the exchange of information with foreign nationals.

Regardless of the country or situation, it is clear that US military-to-military relations with host nation counterparts must change and adapt based on the dynamic nature of US government and host nation policies. When repeated changes in political and military policy must unfortunately be considered the only situational constant, US military personnel should accept the volatility of government policies and establish military-to-military relations as a thread of continuity that is capable of keeping the lines of communication open and eventually, foster bilateral intelligence sharing.

US military personnel in Afghanistan have experienced first-hand how military-to-military relations can be controlled by powerful external forces. During the initial phases of Operation Enduring Freedom, the validity of indigenous information was questionable and/or compromised by Northern Alliance personnel with ties to the Al Qaeda and Taliban forces they were supposed to engage.²³¹ In Iraq, US forces have been

²²⁹ Waghelstein, J.D. (1985, January) El Salvador: Observations and Experiences in Counterinsurgency. Study Project published by the US Army War College, Carlisle Barracks, PA, 45.

²³⁰ Thomas H. Johnson, interview with the author, Monterey, California, 15 June 2005. Professor Johnson is currently an Associate Research Professor in the Department of National Security Affairs at Naval Postgraduate School in Monterey, CA.

²³¹ Interview of US Army Special Forces Operational Detachment Alpha Team Leader conducted by the author, Naval Postgraduate School, Monterey, California, 09 May 2005.

in combat for over two years and have yet to eliminate the insurgency's ability to terrorize indigenous forces and the civilian population.²³² In Colombia, interviews with US trainers reveal that operational tempo, inter-service cooperation and the sharing of information can be easily degraded by the selfish aspects of the old Colombian military culture.²³³ The US military's difficulty in establishing strong military-to-military relations with indigenous forces can in many cases indicate a failure to conduct the intelligence preparation of the battlespace necessary to identify important social networks, tribal loyalties, language barriers, and the centers of gravity of any existing bilateral military relationship. An American inability to deal with the effects of individualism, ethnic allegiances, and often well-deserved mistrust of American involvement can also indicate a US military refusal to acknowledge institutional biases or a failure to successfully grow indigenous capabilities.

Every conflict, and therefore every set of military and intelligence requirements associated with the conflict, is in one way or another different. Violent and ongoing US military involvement in several Middle Eastern countries has reminded American policy makers that distinct cultural aspects that were previously unknown or considered unimportant by US military forces can become great obstacles to military-to-military relations. For example, the United States government has continuously and publicly stated that US forces will only be able to return from Iraq when Iraqis come together to handle their own security.²³⁴ However, within American efforts to place Iraqis in charge of their own security and government, it has become apparent that Iraqi soldiers possess a national ethos that revolves around tribes, family, and ethnicity instead of national unity.²³⁵ Can the United States modify the Iraqi soldier's fighting philosophy? How could this be accomplished? For years, countries like El Salvador, Colombia, and

²³² Colonel J. Durrant, USMC (Ret.), Interview with the author, Monterrey, California, 24 January, 2005.

²³³ Interview of Colombia Military Branch personnel conducted by the author, USSOUTHCOM Headquarters, Miami, Florida, 23 March 2005.

²³⁴ Logan, Lara. (Correspondent). (February 23, 2005). Training Iraqi Teams in Mosul [60 Minutes]. CBS Broadcasting Inc. Retrieved February 27, 2005, from <http://www.cbsnews.com/stories/2005/02/23/60II/main675912.shtml>

²³⁵ Filkins, D. (2004). Biggest Task For US General is Training Iraqis to Fight Iraqis. *New York Times*, 1.

Afghanistan have conducted intelligence preparation of the battlespace in accordance with the level of sophistication that is unique to their military intelligence capabilities. Without advanced intelligence architectures or highly trained intelligence professionals, these intelligence organizations suffer from an inability to conduct in-depth analysis, track external threats, and exploit open source intelligence.²³⁶ How can military-to-military relations help?

In countries where situational and professional differences place US and host nation political and military goals at odds, or in which security personnel rely on what US military and intelligence professionals would consider “outdated” methods (second hand information, oral history, and personal knowledge), military-to-military relations can be used to assess host nation military capabilities prior to the initiation of information or intelligence sharing agreements. Among other things, these assessments can identify important cultural and geopolitical differences, identify if US and host nation personnel share common causes and interests, and reveal the level of sophistication within the host nation’s intelligence architecture. As discussed in the adjacent set of recommended intelligence sharing guidelines, a bilateral assessment of the intelligence sharing relationship between the host nation and US intelligence personnel when performed periodically and throughout the duration of American involvement, can help determine if US and host nation requirements are being satisfied correctly and efficiently.

Finally, the development of military-to-military relations as a way to enhance US intelligence capabilities can be considered by critics as a process that just takes too much time. This view is easily supported by any of the conflicts reviewed in support of this thesis. Whether in El Salvador, Colombia, Afghanistan, or Iraq, deployed US military personnel have been often hampered by diplomatic considerations, bureaucratic infighting, disparities in both human and military culture, and complex US and host nation institutional obligations and military roles. The resolution of these types of obstacles within military and political relationships takes time, and as already stated, can strain the development and quality of any military relationship. Nonetheless, the

²³⁶ Villamizar, A. (2004). *La Reforma de la Inteligencia: Un imperativo democratico*, Colombia: Editorial Kimpres Ltda., pp.64.

investment of time when developing military-to-military relations can produce long term benefits, not when relationships are reactively coerced to mitigate unfavorable events already in motion, but when time will allow US and host nation counterparts to reach a consensus in matters that can potentially damage military and political outcomes.

As an example, one such potentially damaging outcome is described by journalist Gary Leech, who in a recent article warned that American efforts to establish a more professional and capable army in Colombia today, could result in the implementation of paramilitary strategies and a dirty war against the Colombian population in the future.²³⁷ This point of view is supported by organizations who believe that countries in the Latin American region have yet to reach the level of solid commitment to democratization necessary to insure abuses will not occur.²³⁸ Whether this type of scenario is considered likely or not, a lengthy time commitment by the United States, Colombia, and other Latin American countries engaged in military-to-military relations and intelligence sharing agreements can mitigate these types of scenarios by allowing US military personnel not just to train, but to remain engaged in relationships while host nation forces mature democratically. Military-to-military relationships should not be considered as the primary short-term solution to intelligence shortfalls due to a pre-requisite need to first establish trust. However, as demonstrated in the preceding case studies and chapters, although the establishment of the trust and analytical skill sets necessary to successfully share intelligence with host nation counterparts usually does take an extended period of time, the potential benefits of this investment can prove to be substantial.

Having reviewed the arguments and counterarguments of using military-to-military relations as a way to enhance US and host nation intelligence architectures, the focus of this thesis is finally turned to US involvement in Iraq. As stated in this thesis' introductory chapter, Lieutenant General David Petraeus described efforts to train foreign

²³⁷ Leech, G. (2004, August 2) Washington's Paramilitary Game in Colombia. *Colombia Journal Online*. Retrieved June 28, 2005, from <http://www.colombiajournal.org/colombia191.htm>

²³⁸ US Southern Command (SouthCom) Struggles to Justify its Role in the War on Terror. Equipo Nizkor. September 2004. Retrieved on March 22, 2005 from <http://www.derechos.org/nizkor/terror/counter.html>

troops on a reduced timeline as “building an airplane in flight.”²³⁹ At this time, US and Coalition forces involved in the training of Iraqi military forces continue to build this “airplane” amidst a dynamic and very deadly security situation. Ongoing and as yet incomplete efforts to train professional and self sufficient Iraqi military personnel, along with the absence of strong military-to-military relations between US and Iraqi forces will be cited in the following section as the major reasons why military intelligence sharing between US and indigenous military personnel has not fully developed and matured in Iraq. Despite this assessment, the set of guidelines developed following a review of military-to-military relations and intelligence sharing agreements in El Salvador, Colombia and Afghanistan is put forward for use in Iraq once Iraqi defense forces are firmly established and take responsibility for the security of their own country; in effect, once the airplane has been built.

F. IRAQ

More than two years after the fall of the regime of Saddam Hussein, an indigenous military institution that is willing and able to engage in wide-ranging military-to-military relations with US forces in Iraq does not exist. In the following paragraphs, US policies and intelligence sharing agreements in Iraq will be analyzed at an unclassified level to describe some of the political and military shortfalls that continue to contribute to this unstable situation. During these discussions, ongoing deficiencies in the training of Iraqi forces and a lack of mutual trust between US and Iraqi military personnel will be put forth as major reasons why military intelligence sharing between US and Iraqi military personnel has yet to fully develop. Although military training relationships have been a vehicle for the establishment of new or enhanced security agreements and improved bilateral security efforts in other countries, an application of many of these lessons to Iraq must wait until indigenous security forces have secured a more stable environment with the help of properly recruited, trained and equipped personnel. It is assessed that once Iraqi military forces are fully and capably instituted, they will be better

²³⁹ Norland, R. (2004, July 5) Iraq's Repairman. *Newsweek*. Retrieved June 28, 2004, from <http://www.msnbc.msn.com/id/5305713/site/newsweek/>

prepared to work with US and coalition forces to develop the trust necessary to apply many of the results and conclusions of this thesis project.

The US military's conventional capabilities, which were demonstrated during the initial phase of Operation Iraqi Freedom (OIF) and brought about the fall of the Saddam Hussein regime, have been subsequently challenged by a highly determined insurgent movement. Information provided to US policy makers and military planners prior to the invasion and occupation of Iraq from sources such as former Iraqi leader Ahmad Chalabi proved to be false in many cases, were motivated by an intent to inform as well as influence. Following the invasion of Iraq, fact finding organizations like the Iraqi Survey Group were deployed overseas by members of the Coalition but directed to focus on the search for weapons of mass destruction, Iraqi connections to Al Qaeda, and the location of possible American prisoners of war from Operation Desert Storm at the expense of emerging US military shortfalls in tactical, human, and communications intelligence.²⁴⁰ After the fall of Baghdad, Iraqi elements of control, administration, structure and safety were found to be in complete disarray by troops on the ground following years of war, international sanctions, mismanagement, and corruption. Nonetheless, the Coalition Provisional Authority proceeded to disband the Iraqi government and armed forces under a policy of de-Bathification. This decision further plunged the US military into a protracted war against former regime elements and complicated the achievement of publicly-stated American efforts to create a democratic government in Iraq. Over two years after the invasion of Iraq by US and Coalition forces, US efforts to incorporate Iraqi security forces into a security plan that is sensitive to both US and Iraqi national interests continue to be complicated by an unstable and violent security situation. More importantly, violent attacks by insurgents and the loss of human life continue on a daily basis throughout Iraq with no end in sight.

²⁴⁰ Member of the Iraqi Intelligence Task Force, interview with the author, Monterey, California, 19 March 2005.

1. Intelligence Sharing in Iraq

Since the fall of Baghdad, intelligence programs have been established in support of both US and Iraqi military personnel. However, during both the initial and current involvement of US military forces in Iraq, US intelligence efforts have supported the fighting without winning the war. For example, and according to a report published by Reuters in July of 2005, the US Army has decided to launch a Joint Intelligence Operations Center in Iraq as part of a drive to improve its ability to fight insurgents, coordinate different intelligence networks, and improve access to classified data.²⁴¹ The report also details the Army's intention to add 3,000 intelligence officers in Iraq through fiscal year 2009, in response to what has been publicly described as a need to manage and disseminate "vast amounts" of intelligence.²⁴² Meanwhile, the additional establishment of "Tactical Fusion Centers" and "Fires Effects Coordination Centers" has already been hailed by US military planners as a functional way to bring together US analysts and war fighters in an effort to sort out critical information and rapidly disseminate it to forces engaging the enemy.²⁴³ However, despite these significant efforts, it is important to ponder if these intelligence sharing measures are the type of solutions needed to go beyond just fighting an insurgent movement and actually begin winning the war. How will the addition of 3,000 analysts who may or may not understand a two year-old insurgency problem help the tactical commander? After all, a media report quoted by RAND analyst Bruce Hoffman states that even though the CIA station in Iraq is now the largest in the world, senior intelligence officers have admitted that during 2004 the CIA "had little success in penetrating the resistance and identifying foreign terrorists involved in the insurgency."²⁴⁴ Significant difficulties in managing and disseminating data in Iraq have stemmed from the fact that US sensor-based intelligence systems are currently configured to handle queries that are far removed from the dynamic nature and urgency

²⁴¹ Shalal-Esa, A. (July 1, 2005). US Army Seeks to Improve Intelligence Work in Iraq. *Reuters Alert Net Foundation*. Retrieved July 7, 2005, from <http://www.alertnet.org/thenews/newsdesk/N01640168.htm>.

²⁴² Grossman, E. (2005). US Forces In Iraq Face Obstacle In Getting Intelligence They Need. *Inside The Pentagon*. 1.

²⁴³ Grossman, E. (2005). US Forces In Iraq Face Obstacle In Getting Intelligence They Need. *Inside The Pentagon*. 1.

²⁴⁴ Hoffman, B. (2004)). *Insurgency and Counterinsurgency in Iraq*. Santa Monica, CA: RAND, 4.

of ongoing counterinsurgency operations.²⁴⁵ These shortfalls, when combined with a violent and dynamic situation on the ground and a bureaucratic US chain of command have resulted in the creation of intelligence staffs that are generally relegated to simply report information rather than provide analysis.”²⁴⁶

In order to defeat an insurgent threat, intelligence efforts cannot be focused solely on achieving measures of effectiveness and reporting on the nearest threat. Intelligence efforts must also be directed towards understanding the indigenous population. Countries like Iraq need intelligence architectures that acknowledge tribalism, transnational influences, and the complexity and multi-dimensional aspects of the insurgent threat. Analysis of these areas requires time due to the complex cultural issues, significant language barriers, difficulties accessing the populous, and the lack of vetted human intelligence sources. In Falluja, the setting in which this thesis premise was initially introduced, American troops did not arrive until two weeks after the fall of Baghdad.²⁴⁷ According to journalist Michael Gordon, constant troop rotations in the area and the limited number of forces caused the responsibility for the city to constantly shift and subsequently hampered American efforts to form ties with the residents and collect useful intelligence.²⁴⁸ Since then, while public media sources have continued to report on US military efforts to manage immense amounts of electronic data in Iraq, writers such as retired Major General Robert Scales continue to assert that the war in Iraq can only be won by establishing personal relationships, building trust, and developing the exceptional ability to understand people, their culture and their motivations.²⁴⁹

²⁴⁵ Grossman, E. (2005). US Forces In Iraq Face Obstacle In Getting Intelligence They Need. *Inside The Pentagon*. 1.

²⁴⁶ Grossman, E. (2005). US Forces In Iraq Face Obstacle In Getting Intelligence They Need. *Inside The Pentagon*. 1.

²⁴⁷ Gordon, M. (2004). Catastrophic Success’: Road to War. *New York Times*. 1.

²⁴⁸ Gordon, M. (2004). Catastrophic Success’: Road to War. *New York Times*. 1.

²⁴⁹ Scales, R. (2005). Human Intel vs. Technology. *Washington Times*, 21.

2. Obstacles Towards the Application of Provided Guidelines

As previously discussed, the successful military training of indigenous personnel by US forces is critical because joint training fosters military-to-military relations. However, the way in which the United States and coalition forces are training Iraqi forces continues to be reviewed and revised by Multinational Security Transition Team Iraq (MNSTC-I) and Multi-national Corps Iraq (MNF-I) in a tenuous security situation. It has also been proposed within this thesis that close military-to-military relations in the past can gradually foster the trust necessary to establish intelligence sharing programs. In Iraq, cultural and security concerns continue to undermine the enormous effort to establish a new national security force. Critics can argue that effective intelligence sharing programs between US and Iraqi military forces have been and continue to be in place. Nevertheless, successful and continuous insurgent attacks throughout Iraq dispute their effectiveness, by continuing to hamper US and Iraqi efforts to provide the indigenous population with the safe and secure environment it needs. In order to defeat the Iraqi insurgent threat, intelligence efforts must be focused on the people of Iraq, not just on combating insurgents.

Ongoing and as yet incomplete efforts to train professional and self-sufficient Iraqi security personnel are one reason why military intelligence sharing efforts between US and Iraqi military personnel have not completely evolved and matured. Although numerous examples of successful Iraqi-led military operations can be cited, the successes have been infrequent and deficient at tactical, operational, and strategic levels when viewed by American commanders eager to have competent Iraqi forces take over security responsibilities. Research conducted on US training efforts in Iraq reveal that many of the problems encountered during the establishment of new Iraqi forces can be traced back to poor recruitment practices, inadequate logistical support, insufficient training, intimidation by enemy forces, and low troop morale. In certain Iraqi sectors, American officers have attributed many of the problems with Iraqi units to a lack of competent leadership and the understandable but detrimental desire by Iraqi recruits to merely

receive their promised monthly pay.²⁵⁰ Despite publicized political optimism, Americans working with Iraqis in the field believe that it will take several years before new Iraqi forces will be able to act against insurgents independently.²⁵¹ The United States government has spent \$5.7 billion to train and equip new Iraqi forces, graduating soldiers in increments of battalion-size classes composed of 1500 troops.²⁵² According to American sources quoted in the previously referenced *New York Times* report, there are now 107 battalions of Iraqi troops and paramilitary police units totaling approximately 169,000 men. However, further research reveals that during the course of 2005, only three Iraqi battalions are actually rated operational by US forces and many others fall short in manpower, training, and equipment.²⁵³

As seen in the previously reviewed case studies, joint, continuous training between US and host nation personnel facilitates close military-to-military relations. However, in Iraq, available recruits and the time necessary to train them are in short supply.²⁵⁴ According to the Carnegie Endowment, a non-governmental organization, Pentagon figures show that the gap between the total number of Iraqi security forces and the total required in 2005 is now twice the size of the gap reported by the US government in January of 2004.²⁵⁵ These assertions are supported by the former head of Iraqi security force training, Major General Paul Eaton, who in a recent interview declared that in Iraq “it hasn’t gone well, [US training efforts] had almost one year of no progress.”²⁵⁶ Following Iraqi elections in January of 2005, Coalition commanders admitted that among 125,000 trained Iraqi soldiers and policemen, the desertion rate has been as high as 40

²⁵⁰ Tavernise, S., Burns, J. (2005). As Iraqi Army Trains, Word In the Field Is it May Take Years. *New York Times*.1.

²⁵¹ Tavernise, S., Burns, J. (2005). As Iraqi Army Trains, Word In the Field Is it May Take Years. *New York Times*.1.

²⁵² Tavernise, S., Burns, J. (2005). As Iraqi Army Trains, Word In the Field Is it May Take Years. *New York Times*.1.

²⁵³ Tavernise, S., Burns, J. (2005). As Iraqi Army Trains, Word In the Field Is it May Take Years. *New York Times*.1.

²⁵⁴ Koopman, John. (2004). Iraqi Recruits Rush To Nation’s Defense. *San Francisco Chronicle*. 1.

²⁵⁵ Miller, J. (2005). Iraq’s Forces: The Hole in the US Security Strategy? Washington D.C. Carnegie Endowment for International Peace.

²⁵⁶ Miller, J. (2005). Iraq’s Forces: The Hole in the US Security Strategy? Washington D.C. Carnegie Endowment for International Peace.

percent.²⁵⁷ Even accounts that positively narrate the gradual accomplishments of newly trained Iraqi forces in cities such as Mosul, decry the compressed time schedule under which indigenous troops must be trained and the inevitable lack of experience witnessed by US trainers in the field.²⁵⁸ In some instances, Iraqi recruits receive only two weeks of training before they are deployed, resulting in indigenous forces that may be efficient, but definitely not proficient.²⁵⁹

The absence of strong military-to-military relations between US and Iraqi forces is another reason why military intelligence sharing between US and Iraqi military personnel has not fully developed and matured. In order to establish intelligence sharing programs, military-to-military relations that are based on trust are essential. The Iraqi people should be expected to take a skeptical attitude towards US attempts at defense reform based on Iraq's previous experiences with foreign occupiers such as the British during the early and mid-1900's.²⁶⁰ In addition, any agenda that currently attempts to rebuild indigenous military capabilities is potentially considered by many Iraqis as tainted and/or dominated by Israeli geopolitical and American oil interests.²⁶¹ Likewise, American soldiers privately question the loyalties of trained Iraqi forces and are suspicious that some of their recruits have been, and continue to be, sympathetic to insurgent causes.²⁶² According to newspaper reports, in regions sympathetic to insurgent forces, Iraqi military personnel have performed poorly based on their contempt for American forces and continuing support for Saddam Hussein.²⁶³

257 Fairweather, J. (2005). Four Out of 10 Desert New Security Force Under Fire. London Daily Telegraph. Retrieved July 8, 2005, from http://www.truthout.org/docs_2005/020205B.shtml

258 Logan, Lara. (Correspondent). (February 23, 2005). Training Iraqi Teams in Mosul [60 Minutes]. CBS Broadcasting Inc. Retrieved February 27, 2005, from <http://www.cbsnews.com/stories/2005/02/23/60II/main675912.shtml>

259 Koopman, John. (2004). Iraqi Recruits Rush To Nation's Defense. San Francisco Chronicle. 1.

260 McMillan, J. (2003). Building an Iraqi Defense Force. *Strategic Forum*, 198, 2.

261 McMillan, J. (2003). Building an Iraqi Defense Force. *Strategic Forum*, 198, 2.

262 Koopman, John. (2004). Iraqi Recruits Rush To Nation's Defense. San Francisco Chronicle. 1.

263 Tavernise, S., Burns, J. (2005). As Iraqi Army Trains, Word In the Field Is it May Take Years. *New York Times*. 1.

It is not unreasonable to ascertain that military cultures throughout the Middle East or any other region of the world are under the constant influence of surrounding environments and societal influences. Therefore, as seen with Salvadoran, Colombian, and Afghan military personnel, Iraqis have unique military styles and customs that contrast sharply against US military problem-solving attitudes. For example, one of the major cultural obstacles uncovered by US and coalition forces during the training of Iraqi forces has been the enduring legacy of Saddam Hussein's military culture, which equated rank with privilege rather than responsibility, and valued ethnic loyalties.²⁶⁴ During the regime of Saddam Hussein, risk aversion on behalf of field officers was widespread and even officers who had proven to be trustworthy did not appear to possess the desire to lead or skills necessary to successfully conduct operations.²⁶⁵ Therefore, the existence of a lack of confidence between US and Iraqi military personnel, an apparent Iraqi unwillingness to lead, and an ongoing concern by US military personnel regarding a lack of resources and time to train indigenous forces appear to be poised to repeatedly defeat efforts to establish the trust needed to establish a bilateral intelligence sharing relationship.

G. CONCLUSION

Within the last years, the Secretary of Defense of the United States, Donald Rumsfeld, showed evidence of a more proactive vision within the US government by directing the US military to develop units that can "build partnerships with failing states to defeat internal terrorist threats."²⁶⁶ Within this context, the United States would seek to deploy military forces early to confront "guerrillas before an insurgency can take root and build popular support."²⁶⁷ In addition to efforts underway in Afghanistan and Iraq, Robert D. Kaplan of the *Atlantic Monthly* writes that, under a program titled *The Pan*

²⁶⁴ Bowden, M. (2005). When Officers Aren't Gentlemen ... *Wall Street Journal*, 18.

²⁶⁵ Bowden, M. (2005). When Officers Aren't Gentlemen ... *Wall Street Journal*, 18.

²⁶⁶ Jaffe, G. (2005). Rumsfeld Details Big Military Shift In New Document: Drive for Pre-emptive Force, Wider Influence Will Trigger Changes in Strategy, Budget, *The Wall Street Journal*, A1.

²⁶⁷ Jaffe, G. (2005). Rumsfeld Details Big Military Shift In New Document: Drive for Pre-emptive Force, Wider Influence Will Trigger Changes in Strategy, Budget, *The Wall Street Journal*, A1.

Sahel Initiative, US Marines and US Army Special Forces are already training local militaries in Mauritania, Mali, Niger, and Chad in order to offset the infiltration of Al Qaeda within Sub Saharan Africa.²⁶⁸ The US Marine Corps has begun to form foreign military training units to help countries improve their armed forces and teach them civil-military operations using newly acquired language skills and cultural awareness from foreign militaries.²⁶⁹ Meanwhile, back in Iraq, US Forces have already created military transition teams composed of US soldiers to work with indigenous security troops, and there are plans for up to 10,000 Americans to be assigned to Iraqi units at multiple levels, reportedly from division to battalions and companies, with up to 10 US personnel at the battalion level and 2 personnel with each company.²⁷⁰ In his address to the nation on June 28th, 2005, United States President George W. Bush substantiated these media reports by stating that US forces are embedding Coalition "Transition Teams" inside Iraqi units who live, work, and fight together with their Iraqi comrades and provide them with battlefield advice and assistance with important skills such as urban combat, intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance techniques during and after combat operations.²⁷¹

Developments such as the ones listed above are encouraging because the Global War on Terrorism demands that American and coalition forces deploy professional military cadres that resist the desire to conduct reactive, conventional operations and instead collaborate with each other and host nation counterparts in order to facilitate the specific type of combat needed to defeat the enemy. These efforts also appear to be geared towards the empowerment of Iraqi security forces and will be essential in preventing tribal and social unrest following the eventual departure of US and Coalition forces. However, the fact remains that in Iraq, establishing a capable and vetted security

²⁶⁸ Feickert, A. (2005). *US Military Operations in the Global War on Terrorism: Afghanistan, Africa, the Philippines, and Colombia* (Congressional Research Service [CRS] Report for Congress Order Code RL32758). Washington D.C.: Library of Congress, 8.

²⁶⁹ Ma. J. (2005). Marine Corps To Support US SOCOM In The Training of Foreign Militaries. *In The Navy*. 4.

²⁷⁰ Tavernise, S., Burns, J. (2005). As Iraqi Army Trains, Word In the Field Is it May Take Years. *New York Times*.1.

²⁷¹ United States President George W. Bush (June 28, 2005). *President's Remarks on the War in Iraq*. Retrieved July 8, 2005 from <http://www.foxnews.com/story/0,2933,160969,00.html>

force is currently the highest and perhaps most elusive priority.²⁷² Therefore, although this thesis demonstrates the value of establishing future intelligence architectures using military-to-military relations through case studies of US military involvement in El Salvador, Colombia and Afghanistan, it is asserted that the period in which successful application of the enclosed guidelines will be most effective in Iraq begins once Iraqi security forces have been successfully developed and trained.

This thesis has analyzed aspects of US political and military involvement in El Salvador, Colombia, Afghanistan and Iraq in an effort to establish the value of military relationships as a way to improve intelligence architectures in areas of present and future American interest. This thesis has also presented examples of the successful and unsuccessful implementation of intelligence sharing measures between these countries and the United States during the course of established joint military training and combat operations. Based on the research conducted, it has been asserted that well-established military relationships and subsequent intelligence and information sharing agreements can support long-term US security policies in countries of past, current, and future national interest. The guidelines provided in the following pages explain how to use military-to-military relations as a vehicle to a better intelligence infrastructure and can help in the establishment or development of enhanced intelligence sharing agreements. These guidelines have been extrapolated from an analysis of political, military, cultural, and intelligence sharing characteristics in El Salvador, Colombia, Afghanistan, and Iraq and are presented to help the US and host nation personnel develop better intelligence capabilities through the training of host nation military forces; in effect, locally train an army of intelligence analysts. Successful tactical, operational, and strategic outcomes resulting from the relationships established between US and host nation military personnel gradually breed a sense of mutual trust. Military-to-military relations are more than just a means to exchange information. Military-to-military relations have been presented as a way to develop the trust necessary to conduct coalition operations in areas

²⁷² Madhani, A. (2004) In Race To Train Iraq Security Force, GIs Find Trust Is Biggest Obstacle. *Chicago Tribune*. Retrieved July 15, 2004 from <http://www.cheerleaders.homestead.com/newsclips15.html>

of current and future US national interest, at a time when increased bilateral cooperation and intelligence sharing between the United States and emerging governments are desperately needed.

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VII. GUIDELINES: HOW TO TRAIN AN ARMY OF INTELLIGENCE ANALYSTS

A. INTRODUCTION

International military-to-military relationships must be considered essential to the establishment of long term intelligence sharing agreements between the United States and the governments of current and future areas of conflict. These relationships offer a vehicle by which the United States and host nation military and intelligence personnel can collaborate to defeat threats to mutually held interests and policies. It has been correctly hypothesized that the United States military can mitigate intelligence shortfalls by cooperating and training with foreign counterparts using the lessons learned during the involvement of United States military personnel in El Salvador, Colombia, Afghanistan, and Iraq. Therefore, the value of establishing better intelligence architectures through military-to-military relations and the ongoing training of host nation military forces should not be ignored.²⁷³

The purpose of this chapter is to provide a list of guidelines that, based on specific case studies, can establish or improve American intelligence sharing capabilities by way of international military-to-military relations; in effect, help the United States and host nations successfully and locally train an army of intelligence analysts. Guidelines characterized as a “General Thesis Finding” are inspired by the intangible lessons gathered from interviewing subject matter experts and researching how military-to-military relations have or have not been a vehicle for intelligence sharing in the host nations listed above. The following guidelines should be used to identify and define the boundaries in which military-to-military ties are developed, and to facilitate the creation of mutually beneficial intelligence architectures. As always, US personnel engaged in a military-to-military relationship must be mindful of the need to protect US intelligence

²⁷³ For purposes of this thesis, an intelligence architecture is defined as an organized intelligence apparatus, a structured environment in which intelligence disciplines, capabilities, and procedures are deployed in support of selected civilian and/or military requirements.

capabilities while simultaneously interacting with host nation counterparts in an honest and open-minded manner.²⁷⁴

Getting Started (General Thesis Finding)

When available, military-to-military relations can and should be used to openly assess host nation intelligence capabilities prior to the initiation of an intelligence sharing agreement. An assessment can:

- Identify important host nation cultural and geopolitical factors.
- Determine if US intelligence assistance is welcome by host nation counterparts.
- Identify where US and host nation personnel share common goals and interests.
- Reveal the level of sophistication within the host nation's intelligence architecture.
- Determine the level and extent of US intelligence assistance required.
- Specify the kind of help US intelligence personnel can or should provide.
- Identify what US and host nation intelligence personnel expect from each other.
- Determine the kind of intelligence assistance a host nation *needs* versus the kind of intelligence the host nation *wants*.

An assessment of the intelligence sharing relationship between the host nation and US intelligence personnel must be performed periodically throughout the duration of American involvement. US personnel must continuously ask themselves if US and host nation intelligence requirements are being satisfied correctly and efficiently.

Be Flexible, Stay Flexible (General Thesis Finding)

In fluid and convoluted environments such as those common to combat situations, socio-political unrest and counterinsurgency operations, military-to-military relations and intelligence sharing can often be facilitated not by design, but by circumstance. Therefore, a constructive attitude and an adaptable outlook that is capable of adjusting to a dynamic environment is recommended in order to successfully take advantage of any

²⁷⁴ The term "host nation" is used throughout this text to generically describe the origins of foreign military and intelligence personnel. The use of this term does not imply that the United States should only engage in intelligence sharing relationships with officially recognized nations. Governing and opposition groups within organizations, states, non-states, and even failing states must be considered as potential allies in current and future conflicts and when necessary, actively sought as partners in intelligence sharing agreements.

opportunity to improve the flow of information and/or intelligence within military-to-military relations at strategic, operational, and tactical levels.

Decency, Professionalism and Trust (General Thesis Finding)

Treating host nation personnel with decency and professionalism fosters the trust necessary to develop a successful and productive intelligence sharing relationship. This type of relationship can be helpful when trying to determine what kind of intelligence platform or product best supports bilateral policies and goals. Behavior that may appear arrogant, omnipotent, or insensitive must be avoided at all costs, and replaced with offers to assist in exchange for nothing in return. Within a military and intelligence sharing relationship, professionalism and credibility are valued, mutual trust is nurtured.

Let the Conflict Be Your Guide

In Afghanistan, different types of military operations have been carried out by conventional and unconventional forces in theoretically distinct phases. From the initial ad hoc support of the Northern Alliance, to the deliberate planning in support of large conventional maneuvers following the collapse of the Taliban, to the long-term mutual goal to establish a national army following the election of a central government, dynamic policy objectives have resulted in the need to maintain different levels of military cooperation and generated specific intelligence requirements.²⁷⁵ Therefore, participants in a military-to-military or intelligence sharing relationship should always allow the phases of the conflict to determine the development of those relationships and to guide the format of intelligence products that will best support the war fighter.

Host Nation Capabilities and the Application of US Intelligence

As discussed within the case study of military-to-military relations between the US military and the armed forces of El Salvador, US personnel engaged in a military-to-military relationship must constantly ask themselves if host nation personnel are capable of properly exploiting and understanding US intelligence products. Simply “throwing”

²⁷⁵ The term “indigenous” is not only used to refer to officially sanctioned military forces within a host nation, but to also refer to any organized group, regardless of sophistication, which can be rallied to support US or coalition objectives.

intelligence at host nation personnel who are unable to understand US intelligence products or capabilities can lead to the misinterpretation of intelligence, place fielded forces in danger, and damage the credibility of intelligence professionals involved in a military-to-military relationship. Military-to-military relationships can provide a vehicle in which qualified US intelligence professionals can help host nation counterparts improve their ability to understand intelligence products and insure their proper and effective application.

Unconventional Intelligence

US personnel must be willing to explore new and unconventional ways to provide intelligence support. In some cases, tough foreign disclosure laws did not stop US and Colombian military personnel from instituting joint collaboration, collection, and information dissemination programs. These programs have mitigated foreign disclosure issues because information and intelligence is produced jointly, and not exchanged or requested from US assets. Military-to military relationships should be considered as an opportunity for professional innovation based on the established nature of the circumstances. US and host nation personnel must think inside and outside the “intelligence cooperation box.”

Usefulness: The True Value of Intelligence

The usefulness of intelligence should not be measured in the context of US interests alone. Through the use of military-to-military relations, US intelligence personnel working in El Salvador eventually realized the benefit of regularly questioning host nation counterparts on whether the intelligence products provided continued to be useful.²⁷⁶ Moreover, US personnel also realized the importance of independently determining whether their intelligence platforms had something useful to contribute to the decision-making process. US personnel and their host nation counterparts must always be honest with each other concerning the value of the US intelligence provided.

²⁷⁶ US Navy Intelligence Liaison Officer, interview conducted by the author, Monterey, California, 26 January 2005. Currently a senior officer in the US Naval Intelligence community, he served as chief of a technical analysis team upon reporting to El Salvador in 1987.

US personnel involved in an intelligence or information sharing relationship must be knowledgeable of intelligence capabilities and limitations in order to properly educate host nation partners, avoid misleading intelligence consumers, and unnecessarily raise political and military expectations. US personnel must assess and reassess the intelligence products provided and ask themselves if host nation counterparts are receiving the right kind of intelligence support.

Temporarily Assigned “Wonders” and the Revolving Door

Personnel continuity is a serious challenge to intelligence support and mission success. Military-to-military relations thrive on a two-way exchange of information that must be as seamless as possible and provides continuous military and intelligence support. Once qualified personnel are identified and assigned to an intelligence sharing program, they must be deployed for an amount of time that will guarantee maximum continuity of effort. Standard rotations consisting of ninety days or six months are often not enough to develop the personal relationships and intelligence protocols necessary to achieve mutual policy goals. To host nation counterparts in countries such as El Salvador, the length of US personnel deployments often symbolized the level of US commitment to the mutual cause. In Afghanistan, a “revolving door” training policy which constantly introduces and removes trainers to accommodate rotation schedules or includes a wide variety of multinational military influences has hampered US efforts to establish continuous operational and intelligence relations with host nation personnel at the grassroots level. Military culture takes years to build and efforts that continuously rotate the level of experience, origin, and number of trainers can collectively distract the host nation’s introspective efforts to develop a military identity. In order for an intelligence sharing relationship to be successful, continuity during the training of host nation counterparts is key.

The Use of Intelligence as a Commodity

A constant supply of US intelligence support can cause foreign military counterparts to become dependent on US intelligence capabilities. As demonstrated in countries such as El Salvador and Colombia, the availability and demonstrated capability

of US intelligence products and information can become a commodity, which correctly or incorrectly, can be used as a way to influence host nation counterparts. The improper use of intelligence as a way to force policy changes within a country appears to obscure the transparency of a military-to-military relationship by unduly calling into question the host nation's commitment and/or priorities. Although the use of intelligence as a way to influence and motivate host nation counterparts to become more politically compliant or battle ready seems to have yielded positive results in the past, the use of intelligence as a commodity remains a technique that should be considered fraught with peril.

Manning Military Relations and Intelligence Sharing Agreements

Aside from carefully reviewing the level of experience held by the personnel assigned to train and mentor host nation intelligence professionals, consideration must be given (when possible) to the staffing of US military positions with personnel that share common military service bonds. In El Salvador, the staffing of regional intelligence centers (RICs) and the military group (USMILGP-ES) with US military personnel that belonged to the same military service and military occupational specialty provided a common organizational and professional denominator, and unexpectedly provided an additional link between the strategic USMILGP-ES and the operational level of the RICs. Whenever possible, US and host nation personnel must look to establish common internal and external service and occupational bonds in an effort to strengthen military and intelligence sharing relationships.

Military-to-Whom Relations

Colombia's use of police forces in what American personnel may consider military missions, as well as the existence of non-military, national security forces in neighboring countries such as Costa Rica and Panama serves as a reminder that military-to-military relationships should not be limited to military entities. As stated in the chapter dedicated to the development of new intelligence architectures, the development of intelligence architectures capable of interacting with military, paramilitary, and/or law

enforcement organizations fulfilling responsible national security roles is critical to establishing and maintaining successful political, military, and intelligence sharing relations today and in the future.

Teaching as a Way to Say “Thank You”

In situations where US personnel are limited in the amount of information they can share with host nation personnel due to security classification protocols, the case study of US involvement in Colombia advocates the use of military-to-military relations as a medium by which a host nation’s cooperation can be compensated. The reciprocation of a host nation’s cooperation with dedicated programs run by qualified US personnel and designed to teach counterparts how to collect and analyze their own intelligence can empower the host nation, increase the capabilities and situational awareness of both countries, and strengthen military-to-military cooperation. Training host nation counterparts to fuse multiple intelligence disciplines, develop and understand intelligence collection plans, and carry out intelligence preparation of the battlespace can provide US counterparts with the analytical skills necessary to successfully convert information to intelligence. Moreover, it can foster feelings of trust between counterparts and can lead to future and more meaningful exchanges of information. The teaching of analytical skills to host nation counterparts can be an intelligence capability multiplier.

Before, During, After ...and Beyond

The United States military must understand the value of longer-term military-to-military relationship with host nation personnel and maintain them through out the duration of the conflict. The failure by US personnel to nurture military-to-military relations following the defeat of the Taliban in Afghanistan delayed the subsequent recruitment, training, and preparedness of the Afghan National Army because yesterday’s Northern Alliance fighters became today’s provincial powerbrokers. The establishment of military-to-military relations before, during, and after a conflict can provide the United States and host nation counterparts with the stability and continuity necessary to carry out long-term strategic plans. Conversely, the establishment of committed military-to-

military relations that span and go beyond the length of the conflict can be instrumental in building the confidence and infrastructure necessary to foster the prolonged sharing of intelligence.

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